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# INISFAIL

A LYRICAL CHRONICLE OF IRELAND

THE IRISH SISTERS

EARLY POEMS, MEDITATIVE OR DEVOTIONAL  
POEMS FOR THE MOST PART CONNECTED WITH THE  
GREAT IRISH FAMINE, 1846—1849

URBS ROMA

ST. PETER'S CHAINS

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BY

AUBREY DE VERE

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# INISFAIL.

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## PREFACE.

(EDITION OF 1877.)

‘INISFAIL’ is an attempt to represent, as in a picture, the most stormy, but the most poetic period of Irish History. In simpler days than ours, when even rude feelings were tender, and when thought had not separated itself from action, poetry and history were more akin than they have been in recent times. In England and in Spain a series of ballads had early grown up, out of which rose the later literature of each country, ballads that recorded many a precious passage of old times, and embodied the genius, as well as the manners, of the past. Irish History no longer stands thus related to letters. Nowhere in Ireland can we move without being challenged by the monuments of the past ; yet, for many of her sons, and those who ought to be the best instructed, and for the traveller from afar, there exists no Alfred, and no Wallace. For the English-speaking part of the population nearly the whole of the old bardic literature has perished, and with it much of a history admirable for the manner in which it exhibits

the finer, together with the more barbaric, traits of a society the spiritual civilisation of which had been early developed, and the civil early checked. Yet for centuries the bards occupied a more important position in Ireland than in any other part of the West: their dignity was next to the regal; their influence over the people unbounded; and they possessed all the secular learning then in the land. The Gael required that even the precepts of the law should be delivered to him in verse, as well as that the lines of the Princes and Chiefs should be thus traced. The influence of the priest alone equalled that of the bard, and between these two orders a rivalry often existed. We have the testimony of Spenser as to the merit and power of the latter as late as the sixteenth century. He admired them and he feared them. The love of the bard for his country was a lover's passion. To him of course his Erin was in some degree an Ideal Erin. He could see the crimes of individuals, and denounce judgment on them; but beneath the accidents of the hour he ever recognised in his Land the child of a divine predilection. The closer the hunters beset her, the more thickly the 'winged wounds' came about her, the more vehemently he hailed her as one 'doomed to death, yet fated not to die.' The name 'Inisfail' signified the 'Isle of Destiny.'

In Ireland the alliance between poetry and love of country was, perhaps, closer than elsewhere. For ages her History was but a record of calamity; and to every generous nature his country becomes endeared by her sufferings. But even in earlier days the bards must have found their best subjects for song among the picturesque and romantic details of Irish story. The antiquity to which it mounted

excited imaginative sympathies: the dimness with which large tracts of it were invested gave a more striking prominence to what remained of it—those great, half-isolated Records which loomed through the mist like mountain behind mountain retiring into more and more remote distance. Some reference to those records, wild as the wildest ‘Irish airs,’ may perhaps render more easily intelligible an enterprise of verse which many will deem rash, an attempt to add a Gaelic note to that large concert of English poetry enriched long since by strains indirectly drawn from almost every age and land.

Long before those three golden centuries succeeding her conversion to Christianity, Ireland possessed culture, laws, and a time-honoured monarchy. It was in part for this reason that she at once became the great missionary land of the North, while foreigners flocked in crowds to her colleges. Her Faith was a tree that rapidly ‘covered the lands with its branches,’ because it had been planted ‘by the water side.’ If Ireland had to ‘wait long for her martyrs,’ it was because the genius of her early institutions was less opposed than that of other Western Nations to Christianity. Most of Europe, including Britain and Gaul, had received the Roman civilisation. With Pagan Rome Ireland had had no dealings, closely as she became linked with Christian Rome. She was an Eastern nation in the West, and a Southern in the North. Her civilisation was patriarchal, not military, in essence; its type was the family, not the army; it had more affinity with the Church, when the Church yet dwelt in tents, than with the complex fabric of the State. It was a civilisation of clans. The clan system would have

been fatal to a people whose vocation was to create a great political dominion. To a country whose greatness was destined to be a missionary greatness it proved an auxiliary, at once affording to her the type of those spiritual clans, her convents, of which those ruled by the great monastic family of St. Columba proved the most potent, and also withdrawing her from the larger worldly ambitions. Had the clan system met with no external interference, civil society might possibly in Ireland, as in India, have preserved its original type substantially unchanged to modern times, without decay, though also without progress. But, on the other hand, the missionary progress of Ireland in three centuries, exceeded that made by half the countries of Europe in twice the time. Clan fights were her sports ; but Religion was her Reality. To it her genius was attracted. Another Eastern characteristic, 'Fatalism,' has been attributed to the Irish race. Her Fatalism meant simply a profound sense of Religion. The intense Theism which has ever belonged to the East survived in Ireland as an instinct no less than as a Faith. The Irish have commonly found it more easy to recognise the Divine hand than secondary causes. They have regarded Religion as the chief possession of man. Such nations are ever attached to the Past.

That Past was indeed too great a thing to be forgotten. Even in our own days, remote and prosaic, by the banks of the Boyne, amid more troubled memorials, we stand and wonder at tumuli the winding galleries of which are supposed to retain the ashes of those kings of the Tuatha de Danann, who ruled in Ireland before the Milesian race. In the isles of Aran, in Kerry, and in Donegal, we still find the

remains of cairn and cromlech and rath, of stone forts, and of those singular houses called 'cloghauns' with their steep beehive roofs. The Royal Irish Academy shows us its silver shields, golden crowns, cups, torques, spear-heads of bronze, &c. The illuminated Missals and Breviaries of the Dublin University prove to us that no sooner had the land become Christian than it applied to sacred purposes the skill it had long before possessed. Centuries earlier, when the neighbouring countries were barbarous, its Brehon Laws had constituted a complete code of civil rule ; while many of its social usages, fosterage, for instance, and the clan tenure of land, hereditary offices, *eric*, &c., were as deeply rooted in the national heart, as when, 1500 years later, arbitrary laws endeavoured in vain to eradicate them. The long list of 118 kings, previous to the time of St. Patrick, astonishes us at first ; but, on examining the material records still existing, we find abundant proofs of the antiquity of Irish civilisation. The traces of the husbandman's labour remain on the summit of hills which have not been cultivated within the records of tradition, and the implements with which he toiled have been found in the depth of forest or bog.

If the ancient memorials of Ireland are interesting to us, much more so must they have proved to the Irish of an earlier day. A green and woody knoll beside Lough Derg is all that for us remains of Kin-cora, the Palace of the Munster Kings, and home of Brian the Great. But to a Gael in the fifteenth century its ruins must have spoken a language as intelligible as that in which old castles battered by Mountjoy address us. To the Irishman, prince or peasant, Nial of the Nine Hostages was as familiar



a name as Bruce was to the Scottish. Bard and chronicler told how, before St. Patrick had summoned King Laeghaire to believe, Nial had ruled over all Ireland; how he had been the ancestor of the tribe of Hi-Nial, from which were descended the Princes of Tirconnel and Tyrone, at whose name the children of Norman nobles in the *Pale*, the four counties round Dublin, trembled; how he had sent against Britain and Gaul those naval expeditions, still for us recorded in Roman verse;\* how he had leagued with his countrymen in Scotland, those Scoti who with the Picts had again and again driven back the Romans behind their further wall till they left the land defenceless; and how, at last, he had fallen at sea, in the port of Boulogne, by the hand of his rival, Eochy. From priest as well as bard he would have heard of the Irish Numa, King Cormac; how he had succeeded to his father, A.D. 227; how he had established three colleges, one for war, one for history, and one for jurisprudence; how he had reduced the old Brehon law into a code; how he had assembled at his palace of Tara his bards and chroniclers, and commanded them to collect all the ancient annals of Ireland into a series—the ‘Psalter of Tara’; how he had himself written a book called ‘The Institutions of a Prince,’ and stored in it the civil wisdom of his time; how, in obedience to law, he had resigned his throne on becoming disfigured by a wound; and how it was piously believed that, before his death, Christianity had reached him, and he had become a Believer.

‘Totam cum Scotus Iernem  
Movit, et infesto spumavit remige Tethys.’

CLAUDIAN.



Still more often would he have heard the tale of King Cormac's grandfather, Conn of the Hundred Fights, who succeeded to the crown of all Ireland, A.D. 123, and who was at last compelled to surrender one half of it to Eoghan More (Eugene the Great), King of Munster. He would have heard how the latter, on the war breaking out again, had sought and found allies in Spain, and with them had perished in a night surprise; how his rival, Conn of the Hundred Fights, was slain, in the hundredth year of his age, by a king of Ulster; and how from a king who united the blood of Conn and of Eugene were descended the great houses of Munster, those of the Dalcassian race, as the OBriens, who held sway in Thomond or north Munster, and those of the Eugénian race, as the MacCarthys, who retained it for so many centuries in Desmond or south Munster, and were at last obliged to share it with the Norman Geraldines.

But the records of which every song-loving Gael heard went up to periods long before the Christian Era. He heard how, at a time when the bards had long enjoyed the dignities in Christian times bestowed on the clergy, a storm had arisen against this song-church, accused of inordinate wealth and abused power. He heard also how it had been saved by the interposition of St. Columba, himself a Poet. He heard how, earlier still, King Eochy had constituted the five provincial kingdoms, as centuries previously King Ugony More had divided Ireland into twenty-five for the benefit of his twenty-five sons, compelling his people to swear by the 'sun and the moon, the dew, and all elements visible and invisible,' that their inheritance should not be taken from them for ever.

He heard how Emania, the palace of the Ulster kings, had been built, before the time of Ugony, B.C. 305, by Queen Macha, who had compelled rival princes to toil at the foundations, and marked with the point of her torque the spot where the work was to begin. The annalist of Clonmacnoise told him how for 850 years the Red-branch Knights, the great order of Pagan Chivalry, had gone in and come out among its halls; how another Queen, Maeve, or Maude, who had herself built the Connaught Palace of Cruachan, invaded Ulster at the head of her army; how her Gamanradians of Iorras had fought with the Red-branch Chivalry; and how, centuries later, the three Collas had burned to the ground that Emania of which the only record remaining was then, as it is now, a lonely rath near Armagh. The chronicler would then have told him that the palace of Tara had been built by King Ollamh Fodhla centuries before even that of Emania had been heard of; that in it, reign after reign, was held the great Triennial Assembly of chiefs, bards, and historians; that each warrior had taken the seat appointed for him beneath his own banner, during deliberations conducted with a solemnity half regal, half sacerdotal; that these assemblies continued to take place till A.D. 554, and that it was deserted for ever in consequence of a malison pronounced against it by St. Rodanus of Lothra. Emania had enjoyed more years of splendour than had elapsed between the first Danish invasion and Queen Elizabeth's wars; yet its greatness was over before Ireland had confessed the Christian Faith. Tara had lasted longer than the whole period of Danish, Norman, and Saxon wars united; yet the weeds had begun to creep over its

old rath as many centuries before Henry II. had landed in Ireland as elapsed between his enterprise and what in Ireland was called the 'Anglo-Dutch invasion.'

Glancing thus with the bards from epoch to epoch, we reach the latest of the remote ones, that of the Milesian settlement. The most learned amongst recent antiquarians assure us that a sceptical spirit respecting that settlement is as unphilosophical as a credulous spirit would have been deemed in the last century. They affirm that the whole social system of Ireland having been based upon genealogical claims, her most important institutions were formed for the purpose of recording facts and dates accurately; and they state that the early chronicles are remarkably confirmed by Science as regards eclipses, astronomical calculations, &c. It is certain that the Gael ever looked upon this period as the authentic beginning of Irish glories, however problematical her earlier legends might be. Rejecting the claims to a greater antiquity, Charles O'Connor, of Balenagar, assigns to the establishment of the Milesian monarchy in Ireland the date of 760 years before our Era, making it thus nearly contemporaneous with the foundation of Rome. A race called Gadelian, or Gaelic, and at a later period called Scoti (as is supposed from their claims to a *Scythian* descent), migrated to Ireland from Spain under the leadership of the six sons of Milesius, king of that country. Their names were Heber, Heremon, Donn, Colpa, Ir, and Amergin. The brothers founded that Gaelic monarchy which had lasted for nearly 2000 years when the mighty Norman race extended its conquests from England to Ireland, a land the political and religious institu-

tions of which had never wholly recovered the effects of the Danish inroads.

It is with the Norman conquests in Ireland that the present Poem commences. It is necessary to make a few remarks respecting the chief characteristics of Irish History from that period to the latter part of the eighteenth century.

The six centuries of Irish History, illustrated by 'INISFAIL,' divide themselves into three portions. The first endured for about 350 years. Its predominant characteristic was Outlawry. The Brehon Law was set aside by the conquering race, and the English Law was refused to the conquered, refused by the settler more than by English kings. The weak were the prey of the strong. Yet even in those ages of wrong and rapine all was not suffering. Flowers spring up by the torrent's bed ; and many a gay song was sung beneath the invader's fortress. Moreover, in the midst of the Norman settlements the Gaelic chief held his own, and around him the old clan life went on as before. Partly through intermarriages, the Norman nobles, in the remoter parts of Ireland, became Irish Chiefs, speaking the national language, and adopting the national usages. It is thus that Keating, writing his history amid the storms of the seventeenth century, speaks of this race : 'Notwithstanding what has been said of the cruelties and sacrilegious acts of some of those foreigners who came into Ireland, many of them were men of virtue and strict piety, who promoted the service of God and the cause of religion by erecting churches and monasteries, and bestowing large

revenues upon them for their support; and God rewarded their charity and acts of mercy with particular marks of His favour, and not only blessed them in their own persons, but in a noble and worthy posterity.' Their gradual amalgamation with the nation at large is a pledge that no estrangement of race or class among Ireland's sons can be permanent.

The second period is characterised by the wars of Religion. They completed the estrangement between England and Ireland. They completed also the union of the Gaelic and Norman races in Ireland. When the last great act of the tragedy had come, at the same side the ancient foes fought and fell. The Cromwellian victories, and the confiscation of more than half Ireland at that time, reduced with comparatively few exceptions the chiefs of both the old races to that condition to which the Geraldines of Desmond had previously been brought by the confiscations of Elizabeth, and the Ulster princes by those of James I. This period ends with the dethronement of James II., when the fall of the old Monarchy consummated that of the old Nobility and the old Faith.

The third period is that of Penal Laws, silently endured. A succession of wars, renewed during centuries with recurrent passion, in defence of ancient laws, national existence, and religious freedom, had remained barren of their intended result. Foreign alliances, even during periods when England was torn by dynastic and religious dissensions, had always proved abortive. The struggle had but rendered Ireland famous among the nations, and scattered among them her warriors, as her missionaries had been scattered in old times. Wrong had

run its complete circle. But the People *endured*. The Faith for which it had suffered preserved it as an integral People. The chains which had never been broken fell off. A more glorious triumph than that so often sought had been reserved for Ireland. It was awarded, not to a fortunate moment, but to silent years ; not to nobles, but to a people—among whom, however, many tempests had sown wide the seed of nobility ; not to spasmodic action, but to inflexible fortitude ; not to arms, but to Faith. When the cloud had rolled by there emerged a People and a Religion.

Persons of the most different prepossessions have arrived at practically the same estimate of Irish History, and in it have thus found the moral of the tale.

The Catholic sees in Ireland an image of the Church herself—for three early centuries the great missionary of the Faith ; for three late ones its martyr ; ever in tribulation, but never consumed ; at one time exalted as a nation, at another deposed from nationhood but to become more powerful as a race, and effecting more in its captivities and dispersions than it could have done if oppression, and the poverty bequeathed by oppression, had never driven it to the margin of waters broader and more lonely than those of Euphrates or Choaspes. To one of a different creed a conclusion morally the same is differently coloured. Justice, he says, ultimately triumphs over wrong. Liberty cannot be trampled down for ever. A Religion is a Cause : and a Cause and a People in permanent union are indomitable. The philosopher shapes the result thus :—The relation between the three periods of Irish History is logical. The Outlawry of the first



period rendered it impossible that in the second a new religion should be introduced into Ireland by means of *Law*. Who were to bow before the new laws at variance with the old traditions? Not kerns, who had never had the benefit of law: not Barons, whose only law had been their own will. The struggle but identified for ever the National sentiment with the Catholic sentiment. Equally close appears to him the connection between the second and the third period of Irish History. The Penal Laws of the latter were blunted by the wholesale confiscations of the former. Misery became the pledge for fidelity. To the Irish people, who had already lost their lands, there remained nothing but their Faith. During the long night of persecution its truths shone out like stars, and wrote themselves indelibly on the heart of the race. Its priests were its only friends (a power greater than they sought being thus, but at a later time, forced upon them): the next world was its *nearest* hope: and it was not likely that either would be forsaken. In the end, permanent instincts and principles triumphed over temporary necessities. In the failure of persecuting laws, and in the restoration of Ireland, one man sees the victory of Faith, another that of Justice, and a third that of Reason; three powers that work, on the long run, to the same result.

In these days few are so biassed by party or sectarian bitterness as to grudge an epitaph to virtue and calamity in times gone by. A timid caution may shrink from Historical Studies (as if the most interesting of studies could be suppressed), but a manly prudence will enjoin them, provided that they be conducted with justice. Ireland is bound

to acknowledge that it was not England alone, or Protestant countries alone, that persecuted. On the long run Truth is a peacemaker. What is to be feared from historical studies in connection with Ireland? The spirit of vengeance? A man must be half-witted to sigh for revenge when the offenders have been for centuries dead. He must be an idiot not to perceive that on the long run, whatever a just cause may have gained for a time through the use of unjust means, it has invariably lost ten times as much through injustice.

‘INISFAIL’ may be regarded as a National Chronicle cast in a poetic form. Its aim is to embody the *essence* of a nation’s history during a long period of that History. Contemporary historic poems touch us with a magical hand; but they often pass by the most important events, and linger beside the most trivial. Looking back upon the past as from a vantage-ground, its general proportions become palpable: and the themes to which poetry then attaches herself are either those critical junctures upon which the fortunes of a nation turn, or such accidents of a lighter sort as illustrate the character of a race. A historic series of poems thus becomes possible, the interest of which is continuous, and the course of which reveals an increasing significance. Such a series, however, as it constitutes a Whole, must be read in its proper order if its meaning is to be understood, and if the Unity of the poem is to be felt. The character of Irish History rendered it natural that its illustration should be chiefly lyrical. In this respect I have imitated the example of Ireland’s ancient bards, with whom the Ode or the Dirge was as common as the Ballad was with the



minstrels of other nations. Throughout, I have endeavoured to be true to the inner spirit of Irish History, faithful to its meaning, and no less to its changes. This accounts for the difference of treatment and tone observable in the three Parts of the poem, a difference which corresponds with the three periods of the history recorded. In Part I. the tone is chiefly legendary, and the treatment objective, because the period of Irish History illustrated in it is that which bordered most nearly upon the legends of Ireland's heroic yet half barbaric time. In Part II. the tone becomes more dramatic, the tragic struggle having reached its agony. In Part III. the more impassioned part of the conflict being over, the tone subsides into the elegiac until the end is approached, and the morning perforce glimmers through the night. Fidelity to Irish History rendered no less necessary that recurrence to certain fundamental *ideas* which the reader will observe, as the poem advances, in various degrees of development—such ideas as those of a Providence punishing at once and exalting; the penance of the Norman; the penance of the Gael; the Apostolic mission of Ireland; her undying hope; the fidelity of her sons in far lands, &c. I endeavoured to make the human prevail over the merely political interest of the theme, and to illustrate Ireland's Faith apart from polemics, and exclusively as a Power of Consolation and Strength. A national Chronicle in verse would, if faithful, be an echo of that voice which comes from the heart of a People, and is heard alike in festive hall and in the village circle, in the church-porch, and on the battle-field. That voice has many tones besides the sadder and more solemn—it records the brief pathetic joy

which vanishes like a flame, and the hope perennial like a fountain. The main scope, however, of a poem which illustrates the interior life of a Nation—the biography of a People—must be spiritual. The moral of a brief individual life is often hidden. Nations are patriarchs; and their lives last long enough to vindicate the ways of God.

The chief aim of ‘Inisfail’ was to indicate that sole point of view from which Irish History possesses a meaning. One great Vocation has been guaranteed to Ireland by many great qualifications, and by many great disqualifications. When Religion and Missionary Enterprise ruled the Irish Heart and Hand, Ireland reached the chief greatness she has known within historic times, and the only greatness which has lasted. When the same Heart and Hand return to the same task, Ireland will reap the full harvest of her sorrowful Centuries. She will then also inherit both a Greatness and a Happiness perhaps such as is tendered to her alone among the Nations.

It has been said that Irish History abounds in touching and dramatic details, but that it is essentially fragmentary. Religion imparts completeness to it. When Religion threw off the bonds of centuries, a deliverance precious to all who respect freedom of thought and freedom of conscience, Irish History entered on its consummation, and justice won the most remarkable of her triumphs in modern times. Had it been otherwise, Irish History would have been no theme for song. Most unfit for poetry, however pathetic it may be, is any subject the substance of which is but violence and wrong, and the resultant of which is despondency. Under the tumults with which poetry deals there is ever an

inner voice of peace. Memory—mournful and faithful—has been called by Keble the great Inspirer of Poetry. There is a Hope, the sister of devout Memory, which is its inspirer no less. Such Hope may stand on a tombstone; but her eyes are fixed on heaven; and if her Song begins in dirges it ends in hymns.

A. DE V.



# INISFAIL

*A LYRICAL CHRONICLE OF IRELAND*

*In Three Parts*

‘A dirge devoutly breathed o’er sorrows past  
Tells also of bright calms that shall succeed.’

WORDSWORTH.



To the Memory of  
THE FAITHFUL AND THE TRUE; .  
OF THOSE AMONG THE SONS OF IRELAND  
WHO, DURING THE AGES OF HER AFFLICTION,  
SUSTAINED A JUST CAUSE  
IN THE SPIRIT OF LOYALTY AND LIBERTY,  
AND WHO SULLIED THAT CAUSE  
BY NO CRIME.





## PART I.

### Prologue.

#### *THE THREE WOES.*

THAT Angel whose charge is Eire sang thus o'er the  
dark isle winging :

By a virgin his song was heard at a tempest's  
ruinous close :

' Three golden ages God gave while your tender corn-  
blade was springing :

Faith's earliest harvest is reap'd. To-day God  
sends you Three Woes.

' For ages three, without Laws ye shall flee as beasts  
in the forest :

For an age, and a half age, Faith shall bring not  
peace but a sword :

Then Laws shall rend you like eagles, sharp-fang'd,  
of your scourges the sorest :

When these Three Woes are past, look up, for your  
Hope is restored.

' The times of your dole shall be twice the time of  
your foregone glory :

But fourfold at last shall lie the grain on your  
granary floor :'

The seas in vapour shall fleet, and in ashes the mountains hoary :

Let God do that which He wills. Let His People endure and adore !

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## *THE WARNINGS.*

A.D. 1170.

### I.

IN the heaven were Portents dire :

On the earth were sign and omen :  
Bleeding stars and rain of fire

Dearth and plague foreran the foemen.  
Causeless tremors on the crowd  
Fell, and strong men wept aloud :  
Ere the Northmen cross'd the seas  
Said the bards, were signs like these.

### II.

Aodh saw at break of day

An oak with blood-beads on its lichen :—  
All its branches rushed one way,

Like an army panic-stricken.  
Aodh cried, ' I see a host  
That flees as one that flies a ghost.'  
Mad he died at noon : ere night  
The Stranger's sails were up in sight.

### III.

Time was given us to repent :

Prophets smote us, plain and city :

But we scorn'd each warning sent,  
 And outwrestled God's great pity.  
 'Twixt the blood-stained brother bands  
 Mitred Laurence raised his hands,  
 Raised Saint Patrick's cross on high :  
 We despised him ; and we die.

---

## A BARD SONG.

### I.

OUR Kings sat of old in Emania and Tara :  
 Those new kings whence come they ? Their names  
 are unknown !  
 Our Saints lie entomb'd in Ardmagh and Killydara ;  
 Their relics are healing ; their graves are grass-  
 grown.  
 Our princes of old, when their warfare was over,  
 As pilgrims forth wander'd ; as hermits found rest :  
 Shall the hand of the stranger their ashes uncover  
 In Benchor the holy, in Aran the blest ?

### II.

Not so,\* by the race our Dalriada planted !  
 In Alba were children ; we sent her a man.

\* Innumerable authorities—Irish, English, and Scotch—record that beginning of Scotch, as distinguished from Caledonian, history, the establishment of an Irish colony in Western Scotland, at that time named Alba—a colony from which that noble country derived its later name, the chief part of its population, and its Royal House, from which, through the Stuarts, our present Sovereign is descended. This settlement is recorded by the Venerable Bede.

Battles won in Argyle in Dunedin they chanted ;  
 King Kenneth completed what Fergus began.  
 Our name is her name : she is Alba no longer :  
 Her kings are our blood, and she crowns them at  
 Scone ;  
 Strong-hearted they are, and strong-handed, but  
 stronger  
 When throned on our Lia Fail, Destiny's stone.

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## *THE DIRGE OF THE INVADERS;*

OR, THE HOUSE NORMAN.

Among the churches sacked and burnt by Dermot and his Norman allies, was that of the Monastery of Kells, to which the headship of the great Order of St. Columba had been transferred several centuries previously, when Iona was wasted by the Danes. The monks are here supposed to have been interrupted, while celebrating the obsequies of their slaughtered brethren, by the return of the despoilers.

### I.

THE walls are black : but the floor is red !  
 Blood !—there is blood on the convent floor !  
 Woe to the mighty : that blood they shed :  
 Woe, woe, de Bohun ! Woe, woe, le Poer !  
 Fitz-Walter, beware ! the years are strong :  
 De Burgh, de Burgh ! God rights the wrong.  
 Ye have murder'd priests : the hour draws nigh  
 When your sons unshriven, without priest, shall die.

### II.

Toll for the Mighty Ones : brethren toll !  
 They stand astonish'd ! what seek they here ?

Through tower and through turret the winds on roll,  
But the yellow lights shake not around the bier.  
They are here unbidden !—stand back, ye proud !  
God shapes the empires as wind the cloud.  
The offence must come : but the deed is sin :  
Toll the death-bell : the death-psalms begin.

## III.

The happy Dead with God find rest :  
For them no funeral bell we toll.  
Fitz-Hugh ! Death sits upon thy crest !  
De Clare ! Death sits upon thy soul !  
Toll, monks, the death-bell ; toll for them  
Who masque under helmet and diadem :  
Death's masque is Sin. The living are they  
Who live with God in eternal day !

## IV.

Fitz-Maurice is sentenced ! Sound, monks, his knell !  
As Roderick fell must de Courcy fall.  
Toll for Fitz-Gerald the funeral bell :  
The blood of O'Ruark is on Lacy's wall.  
The lions are ye of the robber kind !  
But when ye lie old in your dens and blind  
The wolves and the jackals on you shall prey,  
From the same shore sent. Beware that day !

## V.

Toll for the Conquerors : theirs the doom !  
For the great House Norman : its bud is nipt !  
Ah, princely House, when your hour is come  
Your dirge shall be sung not in church but crypt !

We mourn you in time. A baser scourge  
 Than yours that day will forbid the dirge !  
 Two thousand years to the Gael God gave :  
 Four hundred shall open the Norman's grave !

Thus with threne and with stern lament  
 For their brethren dead the old monks made moan  
 In the convent of Kells, the first day of Lent,  
 One thousand one hundred and seventy-one.

*PECCATUM PECCAVIT.*

A BARD SONG.

I.

WHERE is thy brother ? Heremon, speak !  
 Heber the son of Milesius, thy sire ?  
 The orphans' wail and the widow's shriek  
 For ever ring on the air of Eire !  
 And whose, O whose was the sword, Heremon,  
 That smote Amergin, thy brother and bard ?—  
 The Fate of thy house or a mocking Demon  
 Upheaved thy hand o'er his forehead scarr'd !

II.

Woe, woe to Eire ! That blood of brothers  
 Wells up from her bosom renewed each year ;  
 'Twas hers the shriek—that desolate Mother's :—  
 'Twas Eire that wept o'er that first red bier !

The priest has warn'd, and the bard lamented :  
 But warning and wailing her sons despised ;  
 The head was sage, and the heart half-sainted ;  
 But the sword-hand was evermore unbaptised ! \*

## THE MALISON.

### I.

THE Curse of that land which in ban and in blessing  
 Hath puissance through prayer and through  
 penance, alight  
 On the False One who whisper'd, the Traitor's hand  
 pressing,  
 'I ride without guards in the morning—good-  
 night !'  
 O beautiful serpent ! O woman fiend-hearted !  
 Wife false to O'Ruark ! † Queen base to thy trust !  
 The glory of ages for ever departed  
 That hour from the isle of the saintly and just.

\* Between the brothers who founded the great Milesian or Gaelic dynasty in Ireland, about B.C. 760, there was strife, as between the brothers who founded Rome nearly at the same date. Heremon and Heber divided Ireland between them. A dispute having arisen between them, a battle was fought at Geashill, in the present King's County, in which Heber fell by his brother's hand. This may be called Ireland's 'Original Sin,' the typical fount of many woes. In the second year of his reign Heremon also slew his brother, Amergin, in battle.

† The story of the Irish Helen is well known. Dervorgil, the wife of O'Ruark, Prince of Breffny, fled with Dermot Mac Murrough, King of Leinster. The latter, on his deposition, went to England, where he contracted alliances with Henry II. and Strongbow against Roderick O'Connor, the last Gaelic king of all Ireland. Dervorgil ultimately found a refuge at Mellifont,

## II.

The Curse of that land on the princes disloyal,  
Who welcomed the Invader, and knelt at his knee !  
False Dermod, false Donald—the chieftains once  
royal  
Of the Deasies and Ossory, cursed let them be !  
Their name and their shame make eternal. Engrave  
them  
On the cliffs which the great billows buffet and  
stain :  
Like billows the nations, when tyrants enslave them,  
Swell up in their vengeance—not always in vain !

## III.

But praise in the churches and worship and honour  
To him who, betray'd and deserted, fought on !  
All praise to King Roderick, the chief of Clan-  
Connor,  
The King of all Erin, and Cathall his son !  
May the million-voiced chant that in endless expan-  
sion  
Rolls onward through heaven his praises prolong ;  
May the heaven of heavens this night be the mansion  
Of the good king who died in the cloisters of  
Cong !

---

where she lived in penance and works of charity. Dermod died at Ferns, under circumstances of strange horror. Exhausted by domestic discords, as well as the calamities of his country, Roderick retired to the monastery he had founded at Cong. He died there at the age of eighty-two, and was interred at Clonmacnoise, the burial-place of the Irish kings.



*THE LEGENDS.*

## A BARD SONG.

## I.

THE woods rose slowly ; the clouds sail'd on ;  
Man trod not yet the island wide :  
A ship drew near from the rising sun ;—  
At the helm was the Scythian Parricide.  
Battles were lost and battles were won ;  
New lakes burst open ; old forests died :  
For ages once more in the land was none :  
God slew the race of the Parricide.

## II.

There is nothing that lasts save the Pine and Bard :  
I, Fintan the bard, was living then !  
Tall grows the Pine upon Slieve-Donard :  
It dies : in the loud harp it lives again.  
Give praise to the bard and a huge reward !  
Give praise to the bard that gives praise to men :  
My curse upon Aodh, the priest of Skard,  
Who jeers at the bard-songs of Ikerren !

---

*THE LEGENDS.*

## A BARD SONG.

## I.

DEAD is the Prince of the Silver Hand,  
And dead Eochy the son of Erc !  
Ere lived Milesius they ruled the land  
Thou hast ruled and lost in turn, O'Ruark !

Two thousand years have pass'd since then,  
 And clans and kingdoms in blind commotion  
 Have butted at heaven and sunk again  
 As great waves sink in the depths of ocean.

## II.

Last King of the Gaels of Eire, be still !  
 What God decrees must come to pass :  
 There is none that soundeth His way or will :  
 His hand is iron, and earth is glass.  
 Where built the Firbolgs shrieks the owl ;  
 The Tuatha bequeath'd but the name of Eire :  
 Roderick, our last of kings, thy cowl  
 Outweighs the crown of thy kingly sire !

---

*THE FAITHFUL NORMAN.*

## I.

PRAISE to the valiant and faithful foe !  
 Give us noble foes, not the friend who lies !  
 We dread the drugg'd cup, not the open blow ;  
 We dread the old hate in the new disguise.  
 To Ossory's Prince they had pledged their word :  
 He stood in their camp, and their pledge they  
 broke ;  
 Then Maurice the Norman upraised his sword ;  
 The Cross on its hilt he kiss'd, and spoke :

## II.

' So long as this sword or this arm hath might  
 I swear by the Cross which is lord of all,

By the faith and honour of noble and knight  
Who touches yon Prince by this hand shall fall !  
So side by side through the throng they pass'd ;  
And Eire gave praise to the just and true.  
Brave foe ! the Past truth heals at last :  
There is room in the great heart of Eire for you !

---

*SONG.*

## I

WILLOW-LIKE maid with the long loose tresses,  
With locks like Diarba's, and fairy foot,  
That gatherest up from the streamlet its cresses,  
Above that caroller bending mute,  
Those tresses black in a fillet bind,  
Or beware of Manannan the god of the wind !

## II.

No fear of the Stranger with feet like those ;  
No fear of the robbers that couch in the glen :  
But the Wind-god blows on thy cheek a rose,  
Then back returns to kiss it again.  
Manannan, they say, is the God in air—  
So sang the Tuatha—Bind close thy hair !

## III.

The red on her cheek was brightening still ;  
A smile ran o'er it and made reply  
As she cast from the darkling and sparkling rill  
The flash of a darkling and sparkling eye ;  
Then over her shoulder her long locks flung  
And homeward tripp'd with a mirthful song.

*THE LEGENDS.*

## A BARD SONG.

## I.

THEY fought ere sunrise at Tor Conainn ;  
 All day they fought on the hoarse sea-shore ;  
 The sun dropp'd downward ; they fought amain ;  
 The tide rose upward ; they fought the more.  
 The sands were cover'd ; the sea grew red ;  
 The warriors fought in the reddening wave ;  
 That night the sea was the Sea-King's bed ;  
 The Land-King drifted by cliff and cave.

## II.

Great was the rage in those ancient days  
 (We were pagans then) in the land of Eire ;  
 Like eagles men vanquish'd the noontide blaze ;  
 Their bones were granite ; their nerves were wire.  
 We are hinds to-day ! The Nemedian kings  
 Like elk and bison of old stalk'd forth ;  
 Their name—the 'Sea Kings'—for ever clings  
 To the 'Giant Stepping Stones' round the North.

*THE BARD ETHELL.*

## THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

## I.

I AM Ethell, the son of Conn ;  
 Here I bide at the foot of the hill ;  
 I am clansman to Brian and servant to none ;  
 Whom I hated I hate ; whom I loved love still.

Blind am I. On milk I live,  
And meat (God sends it) on each Saint's Day,  
Though Donald Mac Art—may he never thrive—  
Last Shrovetide drove half my kine away !

## II.

At the brown hill's base, by the pale blue lake,  
I dwell, and see the things I saw ;  
The heron flap heavily up from the brake,  
The crow fly homeward with twig or straw,  
The wild duck, a silver line in wake,  
Cutting the calm mere to far Bunaw.  
And the things that I heard though deaf I hear ;  
From the tower in the island the feastful cheer ;  
The horn from the wood ; the plunge of the stag,  
With the loud hounds after him, down from the crag.  
Sweet is the chase, but the battle is sweeter ;  
More healthful, more joyous, for true men meeter !

## III.

My hand is weak ; it once was strong :  
My heart burns still with its ancient fire :  
If any man smites me he does me wrong,  
For I was the Bard of Brian Mac Guire.  
If any man slay me—not unaware,  
By no chance blow, nor in wine and revel,  
I have stored beforehand a curse in my prayer  
For his kith and kindred : his deed is evil.

## IV.

There never was King, and there never will be,  
In battle or banquet like Malachi !  
The Seers his reign had predicted long ;  
He honour'd the Bards, and gave gold for song.

If rebels arose he put out their eyes ;  
If robbers plunder'd or burn'd the fanes  
He hung them in chaplets, like rosaries,  
That others, beholding, might take more pains :  
There was none to women more reverent-minded,  
For he held his mother, and Mary, dear ;  
If any man wrong'd them that man he blinded  
Or straight amerced him of hand or ear.  
There was none who founded more convents—none ;  
In his palace the old and poor were fed ;  
The orphan walked, and the widow's son,  
Without groom or page to his throne or bed.  
In council he mused, with great brows divine,  
And eyes like the eyes of the musing kine,  
Upholding a Sceptre o'er which, men said,  
Seven Spirits of Wisdom like fire-tongues played.  
He drain'd ten lakes and he built ten bridges ;  
He bought a gold book for a thousand cows ;  
He slew ten Princes who brake their pledges ;  
With the bribed and the base he scorn'd to carouse.  
He was sweet and awful ; through all his reign  
God gave great harvests to vale and plain ;  
From his nurse's milk he was kind and brave :  
And when he went down to his well-wept grave  
Through the triumph of penance his soul uprose  
To God and the Saints. Not so his foes !

## v.

The King that came after ! ah woe, woe, woe !  
He doubted his friend and he trusted his foe.  
He bought and he sold : his kingdom old  
He pledged and pawn'd to avenge a spite :  
No Bard or prophet his birth foretold :  
He was guarded and warded both day and night :

He counsell'd with fools and had boors at his feast ;  
 He was cruel to Christian and kind to beast :  
 Men smiled when they talk'd of him far o'er the  
     wave :

Paid were the mourners that wept at his grave !  
 God plagued for his sake his people sore :—

They sinn'd ; for the people should watch and pray  
 That their prayers, like angels at window and door,  
     May keep from the King the bad thought away !

## VI.

The sun has risen : on lip and brow

He greets me—I feel it—with golden wand.

Ah, bright-faced Norna ! I see thee now ;

Where first I saw thee I see thee stand !

From the trellis the girl look'd down on me :

Her maidens stood near : it was late in spring :

The grey priests laugh'd as she cried in glee

‘ Good Bard, a song in my honour sing ! ’

I sang her praise in a loud-voiced hymn

To God who had fashion'd her, face and limb,

For the praise of the clan and the land's behoof :

So she flung me a flower from the trellis roof.

Ere long I saw her the hill descending—

O'er the lake the May morning rose moist and  
     slow :

She pray'd me (her smile with the sweet voice blend-  
     ing)

To teach her all that a woman should know.

Panting she stood : she was out of breath :

The wave of her little breast was shaking :

From eyes still childish and dark as death

Came womanhood's dawn through a dew-cloud  
     breaking.

Norna was never long time the same :

By a spirit so strong was her slight form moulded  
The curves swell'd out from the flower-like frame

In joy ; in grief to a bud she folded :  
As she listen'd her eyes grew bright and large  
Like springs rain-fed that dilate their marge.

## VII.

So I taught her the hymn of Patrick the Apostle,  
And the marvels of Bridget and Columkille :  
Ere long she sang like the lark or the throistle,  
Sang the deeds of the servants of God's high  
Will :

I told her of Brendon who found afar  
Another world 'neath the western star ;  
Of our three great bishops in Lindisfarne isle ;  
Of St. Fursey the wondrous, Fiacre without guile ;  
Of Sedulius, hymn-maker when hymns were rare ;  
Of Scotus the subtle who clove a hair  
Into sixty parts, and had marge to spare.  
To her brother I spake of Oisín and Fionn,  
And they wept at the death of great Oisín's son.\*

\* The publications of the Ossianic Society have made us familiar with Fionn Mac Cumhal (the Fingal of McPherson), chief of the far-famed Irish militia, instituted in the third century to protect the kingdom from foreign invasion. Its organisation rendered it an army of extraordinary efficiency ; but, existing as a separate power, it became in time as formidable to the native sovereigns as to foreigners. The terrible battle of Gavra was its ruin. In it Oscar, the son of Oisín (or Ossian), and consequently the grandson of Fionn, fell in single combat with the Irish king Carbry, and nearly his whole army perished with him, A.D. 284. To this day Fionn and Oisín are household names in those parts of Western Ireland in which the traditional Gaelic poetry is recited.



I taught the heart of the boy to revel  
 In tales of old greatness that never tire,  
 And the virgin's, up-springing from earth's low level,  
 To wed with heaven like the altar fire.  
 I taught her all that a woman should know :  
 And that none might teach her worse lore I gave  
     her  
 A dagger keen, and I taught her the blow  
 That subdues the knave to discreet behaviour.  
 A sand-stone there on my knee she set,  
 And sharpen'd its point—I can see her yet—  
 I held back her hair and she sharpen'd the edge  
 While the wind piped low through the reeds and  
     sedge.

## VIII.

She died in the convent on Ina's height :  
 I saw her the day that she took the veil :  
 As slender she stood as the Paschal light,  
     As tall and slender and bright and pale !  
 I saw her ; and dropp'd as dead : bereaven  
 Is earth when her holy ones leave her for heaven :  
 Her brother fell in the fight at Beigh :  
 May they plead for me, both, on my dying day !

## IX.

All praise to the man who brought us the Faith !  
 'Tis a staff by day and our pillow in death !  
 All praise, I say, to that blessed youth  
     Who heard in a dream from 'Tyrawley's strand  
     That wail, 'Put forth o'er the sea thy hand ;  
 In the dark we die : give us Hope and Truth !'  
 But Patrick built not on Iorras' shore  
     That convent where now the Franciscans dwell :

Columba was mighty in prayer and war ;

But the young monk preaches as loud as his bell  
That love must rule all and all wrongs be forgiven,  
Or else, he is sure, we shall reach not heaven !

This doctrine I count right cruel and hard :

And when I am laid in the old churchyard

The habit of Francis I will not wear ;

Nor wear I his cord, or his cloth of hair

In secret. Men dwindle : till psalm and prayer

Had soften'd the land no Dane dwelt there !

X.

I forgive old Cathbar who sank my boat :

Must I pardon Feargal who slew my son ;

Or the pirate, Strongbow, who burn'd Granote,

They tell me, and in it nine priests, a nun,

And—worst—Saint Finian's old crosier staff ?

At forgiveness like that I spit and laugh !

My chief, in his wine-cups, forgave twelve men ;

And of these a dozen rebell'd again !

There never was chief more brave than he !

The night he was born Loch Gur up-burst :

He was bard-loving, gift-making, loud of glee,

The last to fly, to advance the first.

He was like the top spray upon Uladh's oak,

He was like the tap-root of Argial's pine :

He was secret and sudden : as lightning his stroke :

There was none that could fathom his hid design !

He slept not : if any man scorn'd his alliance

He struck the first blow for a frank defiance

With that look in his face, half night half light,

Like the lake gust-blacken'd yet ridged with white !

There were comely wonders before he died :

The eagle barked and the Banshee cried ;

The witch-elm wept with a blighted bud :  
The spray of the torrent was red with blood :  
The chief, return'd from the mountain's bound,  
Forgot to question of Bran, his hound.  
We knew he would die : three days were o'er ;  
He died. We *waked* him for three days more.  
One by one, upon brow and breast  
The whole clan kiss'd him. In peace may he rest !

## XI.

I sang his dirge. I could sing that time  
Four thousand staves of ancestral rhyme :  
To-day I can scarcely sing the half :  
Of old I was corn and now I am chaff !  
My song to-day is a breeze that shakes  
Feebly the down on the cygnet's breast :  
'Twas then a billow the beach that rakes,  
Or a storm that buffets the mountain's crest.  
Whatever I bit with a venom'd song  
Grew sick, were it beast, or tree, or man :  
The wrong'd one sued me to right his wrong  
With the flail of the Satire and fierce Ode's fan.  
I sang to the chieftains : each stock I traced  
Lest lines should grow tangled through fraud or  
haste.  
To princes I sang in a loftier tone,  
Of Moran the Just who refused a throne ;  
Of Moran whose torque would close, and choke  
The wry-necked witness that falsely spoke.  
I taught them how to win love and hate,  
Not love from all ; and to shun debate.  
To maids in the bower I sang of love :  
And of war at the feastings in bawn or grove.

## XII.

Great is our Order ; but greater far

Were its pomp and power in the days of old,  
When the five Chief Bards in peace or war

Had thirty bards each in his train enroll'd ;  
When Ollave Fodhla in Tara's hall

Fed bards and kings : when the boy, king Nial,  
Was train'd by Torna : when Britain and Gaul

Sent crowns of laurel to Dallan Forgial.

To-day we can launch the clans into fight :

That day we could freeze them in mid career !  
Whatever man knows was our realm by right :

The lore without music no Gael would hear.

Old Cormac, the brave blind king, was bard  
Ere fame rose yet of O'Daly and Ward.

The son of Milesius was bard—' Go back,

My People,' he sang ; ' ye have done a wrong !  
Nine waves go back o'er the green sea track ;

Let your foes their castles and coasts make strong.

To the island ye came by stealth and at night :

She is ours if we win her in all men's sight !'

For that first song's sake let our bards hold fast

To Truth and Justice from first to last !

'Tis over ! some think we err'd through pride,

Though Columba the vengeance turned aside.

Too strong we were not : too rich we were :

Give wealth to knaves :—'tis the true man's snare !

## XIII.

But now men lie : they are just no more :

They forsake the old ways : they quest for new :

They pry and they snuff after strange false lore

As dogs hunt vermin ! It never was true :—

I have scorn'd it for twenty years—this babble  
 That eastward and southward a Saxon rabble  
 Have won great battles, and rule large lands,  
 And plight with daughters of ours their hands !  
 We know the bold Norman o'erset their throne  
 Long since ! Our lands ! Let them guard their own !

## XIV.

How long He leaves me—the great God—here !

Have I sinn'd some sin, or has God forgotten ?  
 This year I think is my hundredth year :

I am like a bad apple, unripe yet rotten !  
 They shall lift me ere long, they shall lay me—the  
 clan—

By the strength of men on mount Cruachan !  
 God has' much to think of ! How much he hath seen  
 And how much is gone by that once hath been !

On sandy hills where the rabbits burrow

Are Raths of Kings men name not now :

On mountain tops I have tracked the furrow

And found in forests the buried plough.

For one now living the strong land then

Gave kindly food and raiment to ten.

No doubt they wax'd proud and their God defied ;

So their harvest He blighted or burned their  
 hoard ;

Or He sent them plague, or He sent the sword :

Or He sent them lightning ; and so they died

Like Dathi, the king, on the dark Alp's side.

## XV.

Ah me that man who is made of dust

Should have pride toward God ! 'Tis a demon's  
 spleen !

I have often fear'd lest God, the All-just,  
Should bend from heaven and sweep earth clean,  
Should sweep us all into corners and holes,  
Like dust of the house-floor, both bodies and souls !  
I have often fear'd He would send some wind  
In wrath ; and the nation wake up stone-blind.  
In age or in youth we have all wrought ill :

I say not our great king Nial did well,  
Although he was Lord of the Pledges Nine

When, beside subduing this land of Eire,  
He raised in Armorica banner and sign,

And wasted the British coast with fire.

Perhaps in His mercy the Lord will say,

'These men ! God's help ! 'Twas a rough boy  
play !'

He is certain—that young Franciscan Priest—  
God sees great sin where men see least :

Yet this were to give unto God the eye  
Unmeet the thought, of the humming fly !

I trust there are small things He scorns to see  
In the lowly who cry to Him piteously.

Our hope is Christ. I have wept full oft

He came not to Eire in Oisin's time ;

Though love, and those new monks, would make  
men soft

If they were not harden'd by war and rhyme.

I have done my part : my end draws nigh :

I shall leave old Eire with a smile and sigh :

She will miss not me as I miss'd my son :

Yet for her, and her praise, were my best deeds done.

Man's deeds ! man's deeds ! they are shades that fleet,  
Or ripples like those that break at my feet.

The deeds of my chief and the deeds of my King  
Grow hazy, far seen, like the hills in spring.

Nothing is great save the death on the Cross !  
 But Pilate and Herod I hate, and know  
 Had Fionn lived then he had laid them low  
 Though the world thereby had sustain'd great loss.  
 My blindness and deafness and aching back  
 With meekness I bear for that suffering's sake ;  
 And the Lent-fast for Mary's sake I love,  
 And the honour of Him, the Man above !  
 My songs are all over now :—so best !  
 They are laid in the heavenly Singer's breast  
 Who never sings but a star is born :  
 May we hear His song in the endless morn !  
 I give glory to God for our battles won  
 By wood or river, on bay or creek ;  
 For Norna—who died ; for my father, Conn :  
 For feasts, and the chase on the mountains bleak :  
 I bewail my sins, both unknown and known,  
 And of those I have injured forgiveness seek.  
 The men that were wicked to me and mine ;—  
 (Not quenching a wrong, nor in war nor wine)  
 I forgive and absolve them all, save three :  
 May Christ in His mercy be kind to me !

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### *KING MALACHI.*

#### A BARD SONG.

##### I.

'TWAS a holy time when the Kings, long foemen,  
 Fought, side by side, to uplift the serf ;  
 Never triumph'd in old time Greek or Roman  
 As Brian and Malachi at Clontarf.

There was peace in Eire for long years after  
 Canute in England reign'd and Sweyn ;  
 But Eire found rest, and the freeman's laughter  
 Rang out the knell of the vanquished Dane.

## II.

Praise to the King of eighty years  
 Who rode round the battle-field, cross in hand !  
 But the blessing of Eire and grateful tears  
 To the King who fought under Brian's command !  
 A crown in heaven for the King who brake,  
 To staunch old discords, his royal wand :  
 Who spurned his throne for his People's sake,  
 Who served a rival and saved the land !

*SAINT PATRICK AND THE KNIGHT ;*

OR, THE INAUGURATION OF IRISH CHIVALRY.

## I.

‘THOU shalt not be a Priest,’ he said ;  
 ‘ Christ hath for thee a lowlier task :  
 Be thou His soldier ! Wear with dread  
 His Cross upon thy shield and casque !  
 Put on God's armour, faithful knight !  
 Mercy with justice, love with law ;  
 Nor e'er except for truth and right  
 This sword, cross-hilted, dare to draw.’

## II.

He spake, and with his crosier pointed  
 Graved on the broad shield's brazen boss



(That hour baptised, confirmed, anointed  
 Stood Erin's chivalry) the Cross ;  
 And there was heard a whisper low—  
 Saint Michael, was that whisper thine ?  
 'Thou Sword, keep pure thy virgin vow,  
 And trenchant shalt thou be as mine.'

*THE BALLAD OF THE BIER THAT  
 CONQUERED ;*

OR, O'DONNELL'S ANSWER.

A.D. 1257.

Maurice Fitz Gerald, Lord Justice, marched to the north-west, and a furious battle was fought between him and Godfrey O'Donnell, Prince of Tirconnell, at Creadran-Killa, north of Sligo, A.D. 1257. The two leaders met in single combat, and severely wounded each other. It was of the wound he then received that O'Donnell died, after triumphantly defeating his great rival in Ulster, O'Neill. The latter, hearing that O'Donnell was dying, demanded hostages from the Kinel Connell. The messengers who brought this insolent message fled in terror the moment they had delivered it ;—and the answer to it was brought by O'Donnell on his bier. Maurice Fitz Gerald finally retired to the Franciscan monastery which he had founded at Youghal, and died peacefully in the habit of that Order.

LAND which the Norman would make his own !  
 (Thus sang the Bard 'mid a host o'erthrown,  
 While their white cheeks some on the clench'd hand  
 propp'd,  
 And from some the life-blood unheeded dropp'd)  
 There are men in thee that refuse to die,  
 Though they scorn to live, while a foe stands nigh !

## I.

O'Donnell lay sick with a grievous wound :

The leech had left him ; the priest had come ;

The clan sat weeping upon the ground,

Their banners furl'd, and their minstrels dumb.

## II.

Then spake O'Donnell, the King : ‘ Although

My hour draws nigh, and my dolours grow ;

And although my sins I have now confess'd,

And desire in the Land, my charge, to rest,

Yet leave this realm, nor will I nor can

While a stranger treads on her, child or man.

## III.

I will languish no longer a sick King here :

My bed is grievous ; build up my Bier.

The white robe a King wears over me throw ;

Bear me forth to the field where he camps—your  
foe,

With the yellow torches and dirges low.

The heralds have brought his challenge and fled ;

The answer they bore not I bear instead :

My People shall fight, my pain in sight,

And I shall sleep well when their wrong stands  
right.’

## IV.

Then the clan rose up from the ground, and gave ear,

And they fell'd great oak-trees and built a Bier ;

Its plumes from the eagle's wings were shed,

And the wine-black samite above it spread

Inwov'n with sad emblems and texts divine,

And the braided bud of Tirconnell's pine,

And all that is meet for the great and brave  
 When past are the measured years God gave,  
 And a voice cries 'Come' from the waiting grave.

## V.

When the Bier was ready they laid him thereon ;  
 And the army forth bore him with wail and moan :  
 With wail by the sea-lakes and rock-abysses ;  
 With moan through the vapour-trail'd wildernesses ;  
 And men sore wounded themselves drew nigh  
 And said, ' We will go with our King and die ;'  
 And women wept as the pomp pass'd by.  
 The yellow torches far off were seen ;  
 No war-note peal'd through the gorges green ;  
 But the black pines echo'd the mourners' keen.

## VI.

What said the Invader, that pomp in sight ?  
 ' They sue for the pity they shall not win.'  
 But the sick King sat on the Bier upright,  
 And said, ' So well ! I shall sleep to-night :—  
 Rest here my couch, and my peace begin.'

## VII.

Then the war-cry sounded—' Lamb-dearg Aboo !'  
 And the whole clan rushed to the battle plain :  
 They were thrice driven back, but they closed anew  
 That an end might come to their King's great  
 pain.  
 'Twas a nation, not army, that onward rush'd,  
 'Twas a nation's blood from their wounds that  
 gush'd :  
 Bare-bosom'd they fought, and with joy were slain ;  
 Till evening their blood fell fast like rain ;

But a shout swell'd up o'er the setting sun,  
And O'Donnell died, for the field was won.

So they buried their King upon Aileach's shore ;  
And in peace he slept ;—O'Donnell More.

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*THE DIRGE OF ATHUNREE*

A.D. 1316.

I.

ATHUNREE ! Athunree !  
Erin's crown, it fell on thee !  
Ne'er till then in all its woe  
Did her heart its hope forego.  
Save a little child—but one—  
The latest regal race is gone.  
Roderick died again on thee,  
Athunree !

II.

Athunree ! Athunree !  
A hundred years and forty-three  
Winter-wing'd and black as night  
O'er the land had track'd their flight :  
In Clonmacnoise from earthy bed  
Roderick raised once more his head :—  
Fedlim floodlike rushed to thee,  
Athunree !

III.

Athunree ! Athunree !  
The light that struggled sank on thee !

Ne'er since Cathall the red-handed  
Such a host till then was banded.  
Long-haired Kerne and Galloglass  
Met the Norman face to face ;  
The saffron standard floated far  
O'er the on-rolling wave of war ;  
Bards the onset sang on thee,  
Athunree !

## IV.

Athunree ! Athunree !  
The poison tree took root in thee !  
What might naked breasts avail  
'Gainst sharp spear and steel-ribbed mail ?  
Of our Princes twenty-nine  
Bulwarks fair of Connor's line,  
Of our clansmen thousands ten  
Slept on thy red ridges. Then—  
Then the night came down on thee,  
Athunree !

## V.

Athunree ! Athunree !  
Strangely shone that moon on thee !  
Like the lamp of them that tread  
Staggering o'er the heaps of dead,  
Seeking that they fear to see.  
O that widows' wailing sore !  
On it rang to Oranmore ;  
Died, they say, among the piles  
That make holy Aran's isles ;—  
It was Erin wept on thee,  
Athunree !

## VI.

Athunree ! Athunree !  
The sword of Erin brake on thee !  
Thrice a hundred wounded men,  
Slowly nursed in wood or glen,  
When the tidings came of thee  
Rushed in madness to the sea ;  
Hurled their swords into the waves,  
Raving died in ocean caves :—  
Would that they had died on thee,  
Athunree !

## VII.

Athunree ! Athunree !  
The heart of Erin burst on thee !  
Since that hour some unseen hand  
On her forehead stamps the brand :  
Her children ate that hour the fruit  
That slays manhood at the root ;  
Our warriors are not what they were ;  
Our maids no more are blithe and fair ;  
Truth and Honour died with thee,  
Athunree !

## VIII.

Athunree ! Athunree !  
Never harvest wave o'er thee !  
Never sweetly-breathing kine  
Pant o'er golden meads of thine !  
Barren be thou as the tomb ;  
May the night-bird haunt thy gloom  
And the wailer from the sea,  
Athunree !

## IX.

Athunree ! Athunree !  
All my heart is sore for thee ;  
It was Erin died on thee,  
Athunree !

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*THE DIRGE OF EDWARD BRUCE.*

A.D. 1318.

## I.

HE is dead, dead, dead !  
The man to Erin dear !  
The King who gave our Isle a head—  
His kingdom is his bier.  
He rode into our war ;  
And we crown'd him chief and prince  
For his race to Alba's shore  
Sailed from Erin, ages since.  
Woe, woe, woe !  
Edward Bruce is cold to-day ;  
He that slew him lies as low,  
Sword to sword and clay to clay.

## II.

King Robert came too late !  
Long, long may Erin mourn !  
Famine's rage and dreadful Fate  
Forbade her Bannockburn !  
As the galley touch'd the strand  
Came the messenger of woe ;

The King put back the herald's hand :  
    'Peace,' he said, 'thy tale I know !  
His face was in the cloud ;  
    And his wraith was on the surge.'—  
Maids of Alba, weave his shroud !  
    Maids of Erin, sing his dirge !

---

*THE TRUE KING.*

A BARD SONG.

A.D. 1399.

I.

HE came in the night on a false pretence ;  
    As a friend he came ; as a lord remains :  
His coming we noted not ; when, or whence ;  
    We slept : we woke in chains.  
Ere a year they had chased us to dens and caves ;  
    Our streets and our churches lay drown'd in blood ;  
The race that had sold us their sons as slaves  
    In our Land as conquerors stood !

II.

Who were they, those princes that gave away  
    What was theirs to keep, not theirs to give ?  
A king holds sway for a passing day ;  
    The kingdoms for ever live !  
The Tanist succeeds when the King is dust :  
    The King rules all ; yet the King hath nought :  
They were traitors not Kings who sold their trust ;  
    They were traitors not Kings who bought !



## III.

Brave Art Mac Murrough!—Arise, 'tis morn!

For a true King the nation waited long,  
He is strong as the horn of the unicorn,

This true King who rights our wrong!  
He rules in the fight by an inward right;

From the heart of the nation her king is grown;  
He rules by right; he is might of her might;  
Her flesh, and bone of her bone!

*THE BALLAD OF QUEEN MARGARET'S  
FEASTING.*

A.D. 1451.

The Irish chronicler thus concludes: 'God's blessing, the blessing of all the Saints, and of every one, blessing from Jerusalem to Inis Glaaire, be on her going to heaven; and blessed be he who will read and heare this for blessing her Soul; and cursed be that sore in her breast that killed Margaret.'

## I.

FAIR she stood—God's queenly creature!

Wondrous joy was in her face;  
Of her ladies none in stature  
Like to her, and none in grace.  
On the church-roof stood they round her,  
Cloth of gold was her attire;  
They in jewell'd circle wound her;—  
Beside her Ely's King, her sire.

## II.

Far and near the green fields glitter'd  
Like to flowery meads in Spring,

Gay with companies loose-scatter'd  
 Ranged each in seemly ring  
 Under banners red or yellow :  
 There all day the feast they kept  
 From chill dawn and noontide mellow  
 Till the hill-shades eastward crept.

## III.

On a white steed at the gateway  
 Margaret's husband, Calwagh, sate :  
 Guest on guest, approaching, straightway  
 Welcomed he with love and state.  
 Each pass'd on with largess laden :  
 Chosen gifts of thought and work,  
 Now the red cloak of the maiden,  
 Now the minstrel's golden torque.

## IV.

On the wind the tapestries shifted ;  
 From the blue hills rang the horn ;  
 Slowly toward the sunset drifted  
 Choral song and shout breeze-borne.  
 Like a sea the crowds unresting  
 Murmur'd round the grey church-tower ;  
 Many a prayer amid the feasting,  
 For Margaret's mother rose that hour !

## V.

On the church-roof kerne and noble  
 At her bright face look'd, half-dazed ;  
 Nought was hers of shame or trouble ;  
 On the crowds far off she gazed :  
 Once, on heaven her dark eyes bending,  
 Her hands in prayer she flung apart :

Unconsciously her arms extending  
She bless'd her People in her heart.

## VI.

Thus a Gaelic queen and nation  
At Imayn till set of sun  
Kept with feast the Annunciation,  
Fourteen hundred fifty-one.  
Time it was of solace tender ;—  
'Twas a brave time, strong yet fair !  
Blessing, O ye Angels, send her  
From Salem's towers and Inisglair !

---

*THE WEDDING OF THE CLANS.*

## A GIRL'S BABBLE.

I go to knit two clans together ;  
Our clan and this clan unseen of yore :  
Our clan fears nought ! but I go, O whither ?  
This day I go from my Mother's door.

Thou redbreast sing'st the old song over  
Though many a time thou hast sung it before ;  
They never sent thee to some strange new lover :—  
I sing a new song by my Mother's door.

I stepp'd from my little room down by the ladder,  
The ladder that never so shook before ;  
I was sad last night : to-day I am sadder  
Because I go from my Mother's door.

The last snow melts upon bush and bramble ;  
The gold bars shine on the forest's floor ;

Shake not, thou leaf ! it is I must tremble  
Because I go from my Mother's door.

From a Spanish sailor a dagger I bought me ;  
I trail'd a rose-tree our grey bawn o'er ;  
The creed and my letters our old bard taught me ;  
My days were sweet by my Mother's door.

My little white goat that with raised feet huggest  
The oak stock, thy horns in the ivies frore,  
Could I wrestle like thee—how the wreaths thou  
tuggest !—  
I never would move from my Mother's door.

O weep no longer, my nurse and Mother !  
My foster-sister, weep not so sore !  
You cannot come with me, Ir, my brother ;  
Alone I go from my Mother's door.

Farewell, my wolf-hound, that slew Mac Owing  
As he caught me and far through the thickets  
bore :  
My heifer, Alb, in the green vale lowing,  
My cygnet's nest upon Lorna's shore !

He has killed ten chiefs, this chief that plights me ;  
His hand is like that of the giant Balor :  
But I fear his kiss ; and his beard affrights me,  
And the great stone dragon above his door.

Had I daughters nine with me they should tarry ;  
They should sing old songs ; they should dance at  
my door ;  
They should grind at the quern ;—no need to marry !  
O when will this marriage-day be o'er ?

*THE IRISH NORMAN;*

OR, 'LAMENT FOR THE BARON OF LOUGHMOE.' \*

## I.

Who shall sing the Baron's dirge?  
Not the corded brethren hooded  
With the earth-hued cloak and cowl:—  
'Mid the black church mourner-crowded  
While the night winds round it howl  
Let them, in the chancel kneeling,  
Lift the hymns to God appealing:  
Let them scare the Powers of Evil,  
Striking dumb the accusing devil:  
Let them angel-fence the Soul  
That flies forward to its goal:  
Prayer can quicken: fire can purge:  
Yet they shall not sing his dirge!

## II.

Who shall sing the Baron's dirge?  
Not the ceremonial weepers  
Blackening o'er the place of tombs:  
Though their cry might wake the sleepers  
In the dark that wait their dooms;  
Though their dreadful ululation  
Sounds the death-note of a nation;  
Though the far-off listeners shiver  
Wave-tossed seamen, weary reapers  
Shiver like to funeral plumes,  
While the long wail like a river  
Rolls beyond the horizon's verge;  
Yet they shall not sing his dirge!

\* The name of an Irish air.

## III.

Who shall sing the Baron's dirge?

Not the minstrels of his presence,

Harpers of his halls and towers :

Let them, 'mid the bowery pleasance,

Sing that flower among the flowers,

Female beauty :—swift its race is

As the smiles on infant faces !

O, ye conquering years and hours !

Children that together played

Love and wed, and then are laid

Grey-haired beneath the yew-tree bowers,

Passing gleams in glooms that merge ;

Yet they shall not sing his dirge !

## IV.

Who shall sing the Baron's dirge ?

Sing it castles that he wasted

Like those old oaks thunder-blasted,

Wasted with the sword or fire !

Sternness God with sweetness mateth ;

Next to him that well createth

Is the just and brave Destroyer !

The man that sinned, the same must fall,

Though Peter by him stood and Paul !

They his clansmen, they his gleemen,

They that wear the garb of freemen

Wore the sackcloth, wore the serge :—

Let them sing the Baron's dirge.

## V.

Who shall sing the Baron's dirge ?

Whoso fain would sing it faileth,

Triumph so o'er grief prevaiileth !  
 Double-fountained was his blood,  
 A Gaelic spring, a Norman flood !  
 To his bosom truth he folded  
     With a youthful lover's zeal :  
 God's great Justice seemed he, moulded  
     In a statued shape of steel !  
 Men were liars ; kerne and noble ;  
 He consumed them like to stubble !  
 The orphan's shield, the traitor's scourge—  
 Sing, fierce winds, the Baron's dirge !

## VI.

Who shall sing the Baron's dirge ?  
     O thou dread Almighty Will !  
     Man exulteth ; woman plaineth ;  
     But the Will Supreme ordaineth,  
 And the years its fate fulfil.  
 All our reason is unreason ;  
     All our glory ends in woe :  
 Thou didst raise him for a season,  
     Thou once more hast laid him low !  
 But his strong life sought Thee ever ;  
 Sought Thee like a mountain river  
 Lost at last in the sea surge—  
 No ! we will not sing his dirge !

## VII.

Who shall sing the Baron's dirge ?  
     'Twas no time of sobs or sighing :  
     Grave, yet glad, he lay a dying.  
 Herald's through the vales were sent  
     Bidding all men pray for grace

That he rightly might repent  
 Sins of his and all his race :  
 Well he worked : three days his spirit  
 Throve in prayer and waxed in merit.  
 The blessed lights aloft were raised :  
 On the Cross his dim eyes gazed  
 To the last breath's ebb and gurge—  
 No ! for him we chant no dirge !

### THE STATUTE OF KILKENNY.

The Statute of Kilkenny, passed A.D. 1362, is thus described by an English historian, Mr. Plowden :—‘It was enacted that intermarriages with the natives, or any connection with them *as fosterers, or in the way of gossipred*, should be punished as high treason ; that the use of their name, language, apparel, or customs should be punished with the forfeiture of lands and tenements ; that to submit to be governed by the Brehon Laws was treason ; that the English should not make war upon the natives without the permission and authority of Government ; that the English should not permit the Irish to graze upon their lands ; that they should not admit them to any benefice or religious privilege, or even entertain their bards.’

Of old ye warr'd on men : to-day  
 On women and on babes ye war ;  
 The noble's child his head must lay  
 Beneath the peasant's roof no more !

I saw in sleep the infant's hand  
 His foster-brother's fiercely grasp ;  
 His warm arm, lithe as willow wand,  
 Twines me each day with closer clasp !

O infant smiler ! grief-beguiler !  
 Between the oppressor and the oppress'd  
 O soft, unconscious reconciler,  
 Smile on ! through thee the Land is bless'd.



Through thee the puissant love the poor ;  
His conqueror's hope the vanquish'd shares :  
For thy sake by a lowly door  
The clan made vassal stops and stares.

Our vales are healthy. On thy cheek  
There dawns each day a livelier red :  
Smile on ! Before another week  
Thy feet our earthen floor will tread !

Thy foster-brothers twain for thee  
Would face the wolves on snowy fell :  
Smile on ! the ' Irish Enemy '  
Will fence their Norman nursling well.

The nursling as the child is dear ;  
Thy Mother loves not like thy nurse !  
That babbling Mandate steps not near  
Thy cot but o'er her bleeding corse !

---

## *THE DAYS OF OUTLAWRY.*

### I.

A CRY comes up from wood and wold,  
A wail from fen and marish,  
' Grant us our Laws, and take our gold ;  
Like beasts dog-chased we perish.'—  
The hunters of their kind reply,  
' Our sports we scorn to barter ;  
We rule ! the Irish Enemy  
Partakes not England's charter.'

## II.

A cry comes up for ever new  
A wail of hopeless anguish,  
'Your Laws, your Laws!—our Laws ye slew;  
In living death we languish.'—  
'Not so! We keep our hunting-ground;  
We chase the flying quarry.  
Hark, hark, that sound! the horn and hound!  
Away! we may not tarry!'

## III.

Sad isle, thy laws are Norman lords\*  
That, dower'd by Henry's bounty,  
On cities sup 'mid famish'd hordes,  
And dine on half a county!  
A laughing giant, Outlawry,  
Strides drunk o'er hill and heather;  
Justice to him is as a fly  
'Twixt mail'd hands clash'd together.

## IV.

O memory, memory, leave the graves  
Knee-deep in grass and darnel!  
Wash from a kingdom, winds and waves,  
The odour of the charnel!  
Be dumb, red graves in valleys deep,  
Black towers on plains blood-sloken:—  
Dark fields, your thrilling secrets keep,  
Nor speak till God hath spoken!

\* In the reign of Edward I. those Irish who lay contiguous to the county lands, finding themselves in a position of utter outlawry, the ancient Brehon Law of Ireland not being recognised by England, and English law not being extended to them, applied to the king for the protection of the latter. The inci-

*THE THREE CHOIRS;*

OR, THE CONSECRATION OF ST. PATRICK.

A BARD SONG.

WHILE holy hands on Patrick laid  
The great Priest consecrated,  
Three mystic choirs—so sang the bards—  
Their anthems matched and mated ;

The first, that Roman choir which chants  
O'er tombs of Paul and Peter ;  
The next a Seraph band, with note  
By distance rendered sweeter.

The third rang out from Fochlut's wood  
Where once their ululation  
Lost Erin's babes to Patrick raised—  
'Redeem a wildered nation !'

Ring out once more, from Erin's shore !  
From Rome, from Heaven, for ever  
Roll on thou triple Psalm, that God  
May answer and deliver !

---

dent is thus narrated by Plowden in his 'History of Ireland':—  
'They consequently offered, through Ufford, the chief governor, 8,000 marks to the king, provided he would grant the free enjoyment of the laws of England to the whole body of Irish natives indiscriminately.' Edward was disposed to accept the offer, but in the words of Plowden:—'These politic and benevolent intentions of Edward were thwarted by his servants, who, to forward their own rapacious views of extortion and oppression, prevented a convention of the king's barons and other subjects in Ireland. . . The cry of oppression was not silenced ; the application of the Irish was renewed, and the king repeatedly solicited to accept them as free and faithful subjects.'

*THE BALLAD OF TURGESIUS THE DANE;*

OR, THE GIRL DELIVERER.

A BARD SONG.

THE people sat amid the dust and wept :

‘In darker days than these God burst the chain,’  
Thus sang the harper as the chords he swept,  
‘Hear of the Girl Deliverer and the Dane.’

## PART I.

Twin ivy wreaths her forehead wound,  
A green wreath and a yellow :  
Her hair a gleaming dusk in ground  
With ends of sunshine mellow.

Fair rose her head the tall neck o’er ;  
That neck in snows was bedded :  
Some crown, they swore, unseen she bore—  
That queenly head it steadied.

Her sable vest in front was laced  
With laces red as coral ;  
Her golden zone in gems was traced  
With leafy type and moral.

As treading hearts her small feet went  
In love-suspended fleetness :  
And hearts thus trodden forth had sent  
An organ-sob of sweetness.

Upon the dais when she stept  
Meath’s peopled hall rang loudly ;  
Their hundred harps the minstrels swept :  
Her sire looked round him proudly.

The Dane beside him, darkening, sate,  
At once his guest and victor ;  
Green Erin's scourge—the true King's fate—  
The sceptred serf's protector.

‘ Sir King ! our worship grows but small !  
Here Gaels alone find honour :  
A white girl cannot cross your hall  
But all men gaze upon her !

‘ My speech is short : yon stands my fort !  
Ere three nights thither send her  
With twenty maidens of her court,  
Your fairest, to attend her.’

## PART II.

The Dane strides o'er his stony floor  
A strong, fierce man, yet hoary :  
The low sun fires the purple moor  
With mingled gloom and glory.

The tyrant stops ; he stares thereon :  
Sun-touched, his armour flashes :  
His rough grey hair a glow hath won  
Like embers seen through ashes.

His mail'd hand grasps his tangled beard :  
He laughs that red sun watching,  
Till the roofs laugh back like a forest weird  
The laughter of Wood-gods catching.

‘ My Sea-Kings ! mark yon furnace-sheen !  
The Fire-god is not thrifty !  
No flame like that these eyes have seen  
For winters five-and-fifty.

‘My sire lay dead : the ship sailed North,  
The pyre and the corse on bearing :  
Six miles it sailed ; the flames sprang forth  
Like sea-vext Hecla glaring !

‘We’ll pledge him to-night in the blood-red wine :  
’Tis wrought, the task he set me !  
From coast to coast this Isle is mine :  
Not soon will her sons forget me !

‘I have burned their shrines and their cities  
sacked ;  
Their Fair Ones our castles cumber ;  
We were shamed to-night if the bevy lacked  
The fairest from their number.

‘Young wives for us all ; too many by half !  
Strange mates—the hind with the dragon !’  
He laughed as when the reveller’s laugh  
Rings back from the half-drained flagon.

### PART III.

The girl hath prayed at her Mother’s grave,  
And kissed that grave, and risen :  
She hath swathed a knife in a silken glaive :  
She is calm, but her great eyes glisten.

Between silk vest and spotless breast  
A dagger she hath hidden ;  
With lips compressed gone forth, a guest  
Unhonoured—not unbidden.

Through moonshine wan on moves she, on :  
But who are those, the others ?  
They are garbed like maids, but maids are none :  
They are lovers of maids, and brothers.

The gates lie wide : they enter in :  
Loud roars the riot and wassail :  
They hear at times 'mid the conquerors' din  
The harp of the Gaelic vassal.

The Dane has laid on her head his hand,  
The love in his eye is cruel :  
Out leap the swords of that well-masked band :  
Two nations have met in duel !

'Twas God their sentence on high that wrote !  
'Tis a righteous doom—that slaughter !  
His Sea-Kings lie drowned in the castle moat,  
And the Tyrant in Annin water.

From mountain to mountain the tidings flashed :  
It pealed from turret to turret :  
Like a sunlit storm o'er the plains it dashed :  
It hung o'er the vales like a spirit.

'Twas a maiden's honour that crowned the right :  
'Twas a vestal claim, scarce noted  
By the power which trampled it out of sight,  
That rose on the wrong, and smote it !

The harper ceased : aloud the young men cried,  
'That maid is Erin ! Live, O maid, for ever !'  
'Not Erin but her Faith,' the old priests replied :  
'Her Faith—that only—shall the Land deliver !'

*EPILOGUE.*

AT my casement I sat by night, while the wind  
remote in dark valleys

Voluminous gather'd and grew, and waxing swell'd  
to a gale :

Now mourning like seas heart-grieved, now sobbing  
in petulant sallies :

Far off, 'twas a People's moan ; hard by, but a  
widow's wail.

To God there is fragment none : nothing single ; no  
isolation :

The ages to Him are one : round Him the Woe,  
and the Wrong

Roll like a spiritual star, and the cry of the desolate  
Nation :

The Souls that are under the Altar respond in  
music 'How long ?'

By the casement I sat alone till sign after sign had  
descended :

The Hyads rejoin'd their sea, and the Pleiads by  
fate were down borne :

And then with that distant dirge a tenderer anthem  
was blended,

And, glad to behold her young, the bird gave  
thanks to the morn.



# INISFAIL

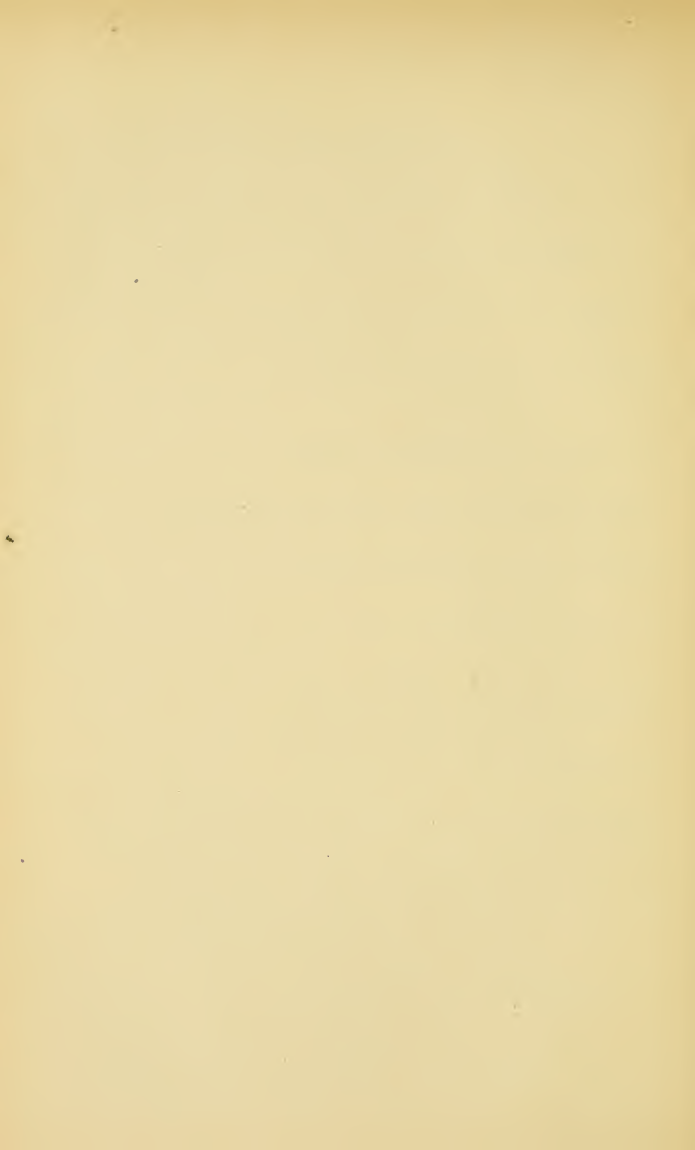
*A LYRICAL CHRONICLE OF IRELAND.*

THE TRAGEDY.

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PART II.

THE WARS OF RELIGION.



## PART II.

### Prologue.

#### *‘CAN THESE BONES LIVE?’*

A VOICE from the midnight call'd, ‘Arise, be alone,  
and remove thee ;

Descend into valleys of bale, and look on the visions  
of night ;

From the stranger flee, and be strange to the men  
and the women that love thee

That thy wine may be tears, and that ashes may  
mix with the meats of delight.

To few is the Vision shown, and to none for his weal  
or from merit :

As lepers they live who see it ; as those that men  
pity or hate :

And to few is the Voice reveal'd ; yet to them who  
hear and can bear it

Though bitterness cometh at first, yet sweetness  
cometh more late.’

Then in vision I saw a Corse—death-cold ; but the  
Angels had draped it

In light ; and that light divine round the unseal'd  
death-cave was strewn ;

And an anthem rush'd o'er the worlds ; but the  
 tongue that moulded and shaped it  
 Was a great storm through ruins borne ; and the  
 lips that spake it were stone.

---

*PLORANS PLORAVIT.*

A. D. 1583.

SHE sits alone on the cold grave-stone  
 And only the dead are nigh her ;  
 In the tongue of the Gael she makes her wail :  
 The night wind rushes by her.

' Few, O few are the leal and true,  
 And fewer shall be, and fewer ;  
 The land is a corse ; no life, no force :  
 O wind with sere leaves strew her !

' Men ask what scope is left for hope  
 To one who has known her story :—  
 I trust her dead ! Their graves are red ;  
 But their Souls are with God in glory.'

---

*ROISIN DUBH ; \**

OR, THE BLEEDING HEART.

I.

O WHO art thou with that queenly brow  
 And uncrown'd head ?

\* *Roisin Dubh* signifies the 'Black little Rose.' It is well known to the Irish reader through the poem written in Queen Elizabeth's reign by the Bard of Red Hugh, Prince of Tirconnel.

And why is the vest that binds thy breast,  
 O'er the heart, blood-red ?  
 Like a rose-bud in June was that spot at noon,  
 A rose-bud weak ;  
 But it deepens and grows like a July rose :  
 Death-pale thy cheek !

## II.

' The babes I fed at my foot lay dead ;  
 I saw them die :  
 In Ramah a blast went wailing past ;  
 It was Rachel's cry.  
 But I stand sublime on the shores of Time  
 And I pour mine ode  
 As Miriam sang to the cymbals' clang  
 On the wind to God.

## III.

O sweet, men say, is the song by day,  
 And the feast by night ;  
 But on poisons I thrive, and in death survive  
 Through ghostly might.'

---

*THE DIRGE OF DESMOND.*

RUSH, dark Dirge, o'er hills of Erin ! Woe for Desmond's name and race !  
 Loving Conqueror whom the Conquered caught so soon to her embrace :  
 There's a veil on Erin's forehead : cold at last is Desmond's hand :—  
 Halls that roofed her outlawed Prelates blacken like a blackening brand.

Strongbow's sons forsook their Strong One, served  
so long with loving awe ;

Roche the Norman, Norman Barry, and the Baron  
of Lixnaw :

Gaelic lords—that once were Princes—holp not—  
Thomond or Clancar :

Ormond, ill-crowned Tudor's kinsman, ranged her  
hosts, and led her war.

One by one his brothers perished : Fate down dragged  
them to their grave :

Smerwick's cliffs beheld his Spaniards wrestling  
with the yeasty wave.

Slain the herds, and burned the harvests, vale and  
plain with corpses strown,

'Mid the waste they spread their feast ; within the  
charnel reigned—alone.

In the death-hunt she was nigh him ; she that  
scorned to leave his side :

By her Lord she stood and spake not, neck-deep in  
the freezing tide :

Round them waved the osiers ; o'er them drooped  
the willows, rank on rank :

Troopers spurred ; and bayed the bloodhounds, up  
and down the bleeding bank.

From the East sea to the West sea rings the death-  
keen long and sore :

Erin's Curse be his that led them to the hovel, burst  
the door !

O'er the embers dead an old man silent bent with  
head to knee :

Slowly rose he : backward fell they :—' Seek ye  
Desmond ? I am he.'

London Bridge ! thy central archway props that grey  
head year by year :

But to God that head is holy ; and to Erin it is  
dear :

When that bridge is dust, that river in the last fire-  
judgment dried,

The man shall live who fought for God ; the man  
who for his country died.

---

*WAR-SONG OF MAC CARTHY.*

I.

Two lives of an eagle, the old song saith,  
Make the life of a black yew-tree ;  
For two lives of a yew-tree the furrow's path  
Endures on the grassy lea :  
Two furrows shall last till the time is past  
God willeth the world to be ;  
For a furrow's time has Mac Carthy stood fast  
Mac Carthy in Carbery.

II.

Up with the banner whose green shall live  
While lives the green on the oak !  
And down with the axes that grind and rive  
Keen-edged as the thunder-stroke !  
And on with the battle-cry known of old  
And the clan-rush like wind and wave ;  
On, on ! the Invader is bought and sold ;  
His own hand hath dug his grave !

*FLORENCE MAC CARTHY'S FAREWELL  
TO HIS ENGLISH LOVE.*

I.

ENGLAND's fair child, Evangeline !  
In that far-distant land of mine  
    There stands a Yew-tree among tombs !  
For ages there that tree hath stood,  
A black pall dash'd with drops of blood ;  
    O'er all my world it breathes its glooms.

II.

Evangeline ! Evangeline !  
Because my Yew-tree is not thine,  
    Because thy Gods on mine wage war,  
Farewell ! Back fall the gates of brass ;  
The exile to his own must pass :  
    I seek the land of tombs once more.

---

*TO THE SAME.*

WE *seem* to tread the self-same street,  
    To pace the self-same courts or grass ;  
Parting, our hands appear to meet :  
    O vanitatum vanitas !

Distant as earth from heaven—or hell—  
    From thee the things to me most dear :  
Ghost-throng'd Cocytus and thy will  
    Between us rush. We might be near.



Thy world is fair : my thoughts refuse  
To dance its dance or drink its wine ;  
Nor canst thou hear the reeds and yews  
That sigh to me from lands not thine.

---

*THE DIRGE OF KILDARE.*

A. D. 1595.

THE North wind clanged on the sharp hill-side :  
The mountain muttered : the cloud replied ;  
'There is one rides up through thy woods, Tyrone !  
That shall ride on a bier of the pine branch down.'

The flood roars over Danara's bed :  
'Twas green at morning : to-night 'tis red :  
What whispers the raven to oak and cave ?  
'Make ready the bier and make ready the grave.'

Kildare, Kildare ! Thou hast left the bound  
Of hawk and heron, of hart and hound ;  
With the hunters art come to the Lion's lair :  
He is mighty of limb and old. Beware !

Beware, for on thee that eye is set  
Which glared upon Norreys at Clontibret :  
And that hand is lifted, from horse to heath  
Which hurled the giant they mourn in Meath !

Kildare, Kildare ! There are twain this hour  
With brows turned north from Maynooth's grey  
tower :  
The Mother sees nought : the bride shall see  
The Herald and Death-flag far off—not thee.

*WAR-SONG OF TIRCONNELL'S BARD AT  
THE BATTLE OF BLACKWATER.*

AUGUST 14, A.D. 1598.

At this battle the Irish of Ulster were commanded by 'Red Hugh' O'Neill, Prince of Tyrone, and by Hugh O'Donnell (called also 'Red Hugh'), Prince of Tirconnell. Queen Elizabeth's army was led by Marshal Bagnal, who fell in the rout with 2,500 of his force. Twelve thousand gold pieces, thirty-four standards, and all the artillery of the vanquished army were taken.

I.

GLORY to God, and to the Powers that fight  
For Freedom and the Right !  
We have them then, the Invaders ! There they stand  
At last on Oriel's land !  
And there the far-famed Marshal holds command,  
Bagnal, their bravest, at his right  
That recreant, neither chief nor knight,  
'The Queen's O'Reilly,' he that sold  
His country, clan, and church for gold.  
They have pass'd the gorge stream-cloven,  
And the mountain's purple bound ;  
Now the toils are round them woven,  
Now the nets are spread around !  
Give them time : their steeds are blown ;—  
Let them stand and round them stare,  
Breathing blasts of Irish air :  
Our eagles know their own !

II.

Twin Stars ! Twin regents of our righteous war !  
This day remember whose, and who ye are—

Thou that o'er green Tir-owen's Tribes hast sway !  
Thou whom Tirconnell's vales obey !

The line of Nial, the line of Conn  
So oft at strife, to-day are one !  
To Erin both are dear ; to me  
Dearest he is, and needs must be  
My Prince, my chief, my child, on whom  
So early fell the dungeon's doom.

O'Donnell ! hear this day thy Bard !  
By those young feet so maim'd and scarr'd,  
Bit by the winter's fangs when lost  
Thou wandered'st on through snows and frost,  
Remember thou those years in chains thou worest,  
Snatch'd in false peace from unsuspecting halls,  
And that one thought, of all thy pangs the sorest,  
Thy subjects groan'd the upstart Stranger's thralls !  
That thought on waft thee through the fight :  
On, on, for Erin's right !

### III.

Seest thou yon stream whose tawny waters glide  
Through weeds and yellow marsh lingeringly and  
slowly ?

Blest is that spot and holy !  
There, ages past, Saint Bercan stood and cried,  
' This spot shall quell one day the Invaders' pride ! '  
He saw in mystic trance  
The blood-stain flush yon rill :  
On, hosts of God, advance ;  
Your country's fates fulfil !  
Be Truth this day your might !  
Truth lords it in the fight !

## IV.

O'Neill ! That day be with thee now  
When, throned on Ulster's regal seat of stone,  
Thou sat'st and thou alone ;  
While flocked from far the Tribes, and to thy hand  
Was given the snow-white wand,  
Erin's authentic sceptre of command !  
Kingless a People stood around thee ! Thou  
Didst dash the alien bauble from thy brow,  
And for a coronet laid down  
That People's love became once more their Mon-  
arch's crown !

True King alone is he  
In whom made one his People share the throne :  
Fair from the soil he rises like a tree :  
Rock-like the Tyrant presses on it, prone !  
Strike for that People's cause !  
For Gaelic rights ; for Brehon laws :  
The sage traditions of civility ;  
Pure hearths, and Faith set free !

## V.

Hark ! the thunder of their meeting !  
Hand meets hand, and rough the greeting !  
Hark ! the crash of shield and brand ;  
They mix, they mingle, band with band,  
Like two horn-commingling stags  
Wrestling on the mountain crags,  
Intertwisted, intertangled,  
Mangled forehead meeting mangled !  
Lo ! the wavering darkness through  
I see the banner of Red Hugh ;

Close beside is thine, O'Neill !  
Now they stoop and now they reel,  
Rise once more and onward sail,  
Like two falcons on one gale !  
O ye clansmen past me rushing,  
Like mountain torrents seaward gushing,  
Tell the chiefs that from this height  
Their chief of Bards beholds the fight ;  
That on theirs he pours his spirit ;  
Marks their deeds and chants their merit ;  
While the Priesthood evermore,  
Like him that ruled God's host of yore,  
With arms outstretch'd that God implore !

## VI.

Mightiest of the line of Conn,  
On to victory ! On, on, on !  
It is Erin that in thee  
Lives and works right wondrously !  
Eva from the heavenly bourne  
Upon thee her eyes doth turn,  
She whose marriage couch was spread  
'Twixt the dying and the dead !  
Parcell'd kingdoms one by one  
For a prey to traitors thrown ;  
Pledges forfeit, broken vows,  
Roofless fane and blazing house ;  
All the dreadful deeds of old  
Rise resurgent from the mould,  
For their judgment peal is toll'd !  
All our Future takes her stand  
Hawk-like on thy lifted hand.  
States that live not, vigil keeping  
In the limbo of long weeping ;

Palace-courts and minster-towers  
That shall make this isle of ours  
Fairer than the star of morn,  
Wait thy mandate to be born !  
Chief elect 'mid desolation  
Wield thou well the inspiration  
Thou drawest from a new-born nation !

## VII.

Sleep no longer Bards that hold  
Ranged beneath me harps of gold !  
Smite them with a heavier hand  
Than vengeance lays on axe or brand !  
Pour upon the blast a song  
Linking litanies of wrong,  
Till, like poison-dews, the strain  
Eat into the Invader's brain.  
On the retributive harp  
Catch that death-shriek shrill and sharp,  
Hers, though choked in blood, whose lord  
Perish'd, Essex, at thy board !  
Peerless chieftain ! peerless wife !  
From his throat, and hers, the knife  
Drain'd the mingled tide of life !  
Sing the base assassin's steel  
By Sussex hired to slay O'Neill !  
Sing, fierce Bards, the plains sword-wasted,  
Sing the cornfields burnt and blasted,  
That when raged the war no longer  
Kernes dog-chased might pine with hunger !  
Pour around their ears the groans  
Of half-human skeletons  
From wet cave or forest-cover

Foodless deserts peering over,  
Or upon the roadside lying  
Infant dead and mother dying,  
On their mouth the grassy stain  
Of the wild weed gnaw'd in vain ;—  
Look upon them hoary Head  
Of the last of Desmonds dead ;  
Head that evermore dost frown  
From the Bridge of London down !  
She that slew him from her barge  
Makes that Head this hour the targe  
Of her insults cold and keen,  
England's Caliph, not her Queen !  
—Portent terrible and dire  
Whom thy country and thy sire  
Branded with a bastard's name,  
Thy birth was but thy lightest shame !  
To honour recreant and thine oath ;  
    Trampling that Faith whose borrow'd garb  
    First gave thee sceptre, crown, and orb,  
Thy flatterers scorn, thy lovers loathe  
That idol with the blood-stained feet  
Ill-throned on murder'd Mary's seat !

## VIII.

Glory be to Him Alone who holds the nations in His  
hand !  
The plain lies bare ; the smoke drifts by ; they fly—  
    the invaders—band o'er band !  
Sing, ye priests, your deep Te Deums ; bards, make  
    answer loud and long  
In your rapture flinging heavenward censers of  
triumphant song.

Isle for centuries blind in bondage lift once more  
thine ancient boast,  
From the cliffs of Inishowen southward on to  
Carbery's coast !  
We have seen the Right made perfect, seen the Hand  
that rules the spheres  
Glance like lightning through the clouds, and back-  
ward roll the wrongful years.  
Glory fadeth, but this triumph is no fleeting barren  
glory ;  
Rays of healing it shall scatter on the eyes that read  
our story :  
Upon nations bound and torpid as they waken it shall  
shine  
As on Peter in his chains the Angel shone with light  
divine.  
From the unheeding, from the unholy it may hide,  
like Truth, its ray ;  
But when Truth and Justice conquer on their crowns  
its beam shall play :  
O'er the ken of troubled despots it shall trail a meteor's  
glare ;  
For the blameless it shall glitter as the star of  
morning fair :  
Whensoever Erin triumphs then its dawn it shall  
renew ;  
Then O'Neill shall be remember'd, and Tirconnell's  
chief, Red Hugh !

---

### *THE TRUE VICTORY.*

A WARRIOR by his stone-dead lord  
Fast bleeding sat, and heard on high



Three Angels making of a sword,  
 Who sang right merrily :  
 ‘ We shape the sword of conquering days :—  
 What jewels shall that sword emboss ?  
 Not deeds, but sufferings ; shame, not praise,  
 The victories of the Cross.’

---

*THE SUGANE EARL.*

A.D. 1601.

I.

’Twas the White Knight that sold him—his flesh  
 and his blood !  
 A Fitz-Gerald betray’d the Fitz-Gerald :  
 Death-pale the false friend in the ’mid forest stood ;  
 Close by stood the conqueror’s herald !  
 At the cave-mouth he lean’d on his sword, pale and  
 dumb,  
 But the eye that was on him o’erbore him :  
 ‘ Come forth,’ cried the White Knight ;—one  
 answer’d, ‘ I come ! ’  
 And the Chief of his House stood before him !

II.

‘ Cut him down,’ said the Outlaw with cold smile and  
 stern,  
 ‘ ’Twas a bold stake ; but Satan hath won it ! ’—  
 In the days of thy father, Earl Desmond, no kerne  
 Had heard that command, and not done it !  
 The name of the White Knight shall cease, and his race !  
 His castle down fall, roof and rafter !  
 This day is a day of rebuke ; but the base  
 Shall meet what he merits hereafter !

*ORMOND'S LAMENT ;*

OR, THE FOE TURNED FRIEND.

## I.

THERE clung a mist about mine eye,  
Or else round him a mist there clung :  
From war to war the years went by,  
And still that cloud between us hung :  
That, that he was I saw him not,  
Old friend, old comrade, fellow-man :  
I saw but that which chance had wrought ;  
A rival house, a hostile clan.

## II.

In vain one Race, one Faith were ours :  
A common Land, a common Foe :  
Vainly we chased through Lorha's bowers,  
In boyhood paired, the flying roe :  
Sea-caves of Irr ! in vain by you  
Our horses stemmed the heaving floods  
While freshening gales of morning blew  
The sunrise o'er the mountain woods !

## III.

Ah spells of Fate ! Ah Wrath and Wrong !  
Ah Friend that once my dearest wert !  
Where lay thine image hid so long  
But in the centre of my heart ?  
Thou fell'st ! a flash from out the past  
One moment showed thee as of yore :

Death followed fast—a midnight blast ;  
And that fair crest was seen no more.

## IV.

Ah, great right hand, so brave yet kind !  
Ah, sovereign eyes ! ah, lordly mirth !  
Thy realm to-day—like me—sits blind :  
And endless winter chills thy hearth.  
This day I see thee in thy spring,  
Though seventy winters make me grey :  
This night my bards thy praise shall sing :  
This night for thee my priests shall pray.\*

\* In Ireland there were occasions when the chief who had pursued an ancient enemy to the death became his sincerest mourner. A chronicler of the seventeenth century affirms that an instance of such a change was found in the Earl of Ormond of Elizabeth's time, called 'Black Thomas.' 'Now, good reader, let there be a truce to words, and listen to the whistling of the lash.—. . . There was then in Ireland Thomas Butler, Earl of Ormond, who changed his religion in the court of Elizabeth. Brooding over the scandal he had given by his apostacy, he resolved to be reconciled to the Church in his last days. He therefore made his peace with God, edified all by his piety, and soon after, losing the ineffable blessing of sight, was gathered to his fathers. Now, ere he died, he was heard to lament two actions of his life—first, that he had ever renounced that holy religion in his youth which in his old age he was not able to succour ; and, secondly, that he had taken up arms against the Geraldines of Desmond, who were ever the strenuous champions of the Faith, and the bulwarks of their country's liberty. Oh, good God ! why did Ormond conspire to ruin them ?'

('The Rise, Increase, and Exit of the Family of the Geraldines, Earls of Desmond, and Palatines of Kerry.' Written in Latin by Brother Dominicus de Rosario O'Daly, in the seventeenth century, and translated by the Rev. C. P. Meahan.)

*THE PHANTOM FUNERAL;*

OR, THE DIRGE OF THE LAST DESMOND.

A.D. 1601.

James Fitz-Garret, son of the 'Great Earl of Desmond,' had been sent to England when a child as a hostage, and was for seventeen years kept a prisoner in the Tower, and educated in the Queen's religion. James Fitz-Thomas, the 'Sugane Earl,' having meantime assumed the title and prerogatives of Earl of Desmond, the Queen sent her captive to Ireland, attended by persons devoted to her, and provided with a *conditional* patent for his restoration. When he reached Kilmallock, on his way to Kerry, wheat and salt were there showered on him by the people, in testimony of loyalty. The next day was Sunday. When the young Earl left his house, it was with difficulty that a guard of English soldiers could keep a path open for him. From street and window and housetop every voice urged him to fidelity to his ancestral faith. The youth, who did not even understand the language in which he was adjured, having reached a spot where two roads separated, took that one which led to 'the Queen's church,' as it was called; and with loud cries his clan rushed forth from Kilmallock, and abandoned his standard for ever. Shortly afterwards he returned to England, where he fell sick; and in a few months the news of his death reached his ancient palatinate of Kerry.—See the *Pacata Hibernia*.

## THE WAIL OF THE WOMEN OF DESMOND.

STREW the bed and strew the bier,  
 (Who rests upon it was never man)  
 With all that a little child holds dear,  
 With violets blue and violets wan.

Strew the bed and strew the bier  
 With the berries that redden thy shores, Corann:  
 Lay not upon it helmet or spear:—  
 He knew them never. He ne'er was man.

Far off he sleeps; yet we mourn him here;  
 Their tale is falsehood! he ne'er was man!

'Tis a phantom funeral ! Strew the bier  
With white lilies brushed by the floating swan.

They lie who say that the false Queen caught him  
A child asleep on the mountains wide ;  
A captive reared him ; a strange faith taught him ;—  
'Twas for no strange faith that his father died !

They lie who say that the child return'd  
A man unmanned to his towers of pride ;  
That his people with curses the false Earl spurn'd ;  
Woe, woe, Kilmallock ! they lie, and lied !

The Clan was wroth at an ill report,  
But now the thunder-cloud melts in tears :  
The child that was motherless play'd. 'Twas sport !  
A child must sport in his childish years !

Ululah ! Ululah ! Low, sing low !  
The women of Desmond loved well that child !  
Our lamb was lost in the winter snow :  
Long years we sought him in wood and wild.

How many a babe of Fitz-Gerald's blood  
In hut was foster'd though born in hall !  
The whole stock burgeon'd the fair new bud,  
The old land welcomed them, each and all !

Glynn weeps to-day by the Shannon's tide,  
And Shanid and she that frowns o'er Deal ;  
There is woe by the Laune and the Carra's side,  
And where the Knight dwells by the woody Feale.

In Dingle and Beara they chant his dirge ;  
Far off he faded—our child—sing low !  
We have made him a bed by the ocean's surge ;  
We have made him a bier on the mountain's brow.

The Clan was bereft ! the old walls they left ;  
With cries they rushed to the mountains drear !  
But now great sorrow their heart hath cleft ;  
See ! one by one they are drawing near !

Ululah ! Ululah ! Low, sing low !  
The flakes fall fast on the little bier :  
The yew-branch and eagle-plume over them throw !  
The last of the Desmond Chiefs lies here.

---

### *THE MARCH TO KINSALE.*

DECEMBER, A.D. 1601.

#### I.

O'ER many a river bridged with ice  
Through many a vale with snow-drifts dumb  
Past quaking fen and precipice  
The Princes of the North are come !  
Lo, these are they that, year by year,  
Roll'd back the tide of England's war ;  
Rejoice, Kinsale ! thy help is near !  
That wondrous winter march is o'er.  
And thus they sang, 'To-morrow morn  
Our eyes shall rest upon the foe :  
Pass on, swift night, in silence borne,  
And blow, thou breeze of sunrise, blow !'

#### II.

Blithe as a boy on march'd the host  
With droning pipe and clear-voiced harp ;  
At last above that southern coast  
Rang out their war-steed's whinny sharp :

And up the sea-salt slopes they wound,  
And airs once more of ocean quaff'd ;  
Those frosty woods, the blue wave's bound,  
As though May touched them waved and laugh'd.  
And thus they sang, 'To-morrow morn  
Our eyes shall rest upon our foe :  
Pass on, swift night, in silence borne,  
And blow, thou breeze of sunrise, blow !'

## III.

Beside their watchfires couch'd all night  
Some slept, some danced, at cards some play'd,  
While, chanting on a central height  
Of moonlit crag, the priesthood pray'd :  
And some to sweetheart, some to wife  
Sent message kind ; while others told  
Triumphant tales of recent fight,  
Or legends of their sires of old.  
And thus they sang, 'To-morrow morn  
Our eyes at last shall see the foe :  
Roll on, swift night, in silence borne,  
And blow, thou breeze of sunrise, blow !'

---

*KINSALE.*

JANUARY 3, A.D. 1602.

WHAT man can stand amid a place of tombs  
Nor yearn to that poor vanquished dust beneath ?  
Above a Nation's grave no violet blooms ;  
A vanquished Nation lies in endless death.

'Tis past: the dark is dense with ghost and vision !  
All lost ! the air is throng'd with moan and wail :  
But one day more and hope had been fruition :  
O Athunree, thy fate o'erhung Kinsale !\*

What name is that which lays on every head  
A hand like fire, striking the strong locks grey ?  
What name is named not save with shame and dread ?  
Once let us breathe it,—then no more for aye !

Kinsale ! accursed be he, the first who bragg'd  
' A city stands where roam'd but late the flock ;'  
Accursed the day when, from the mountain dragg'd,  
Thy corner-stone forsook the mother-rock !

\* The inexplicable disaster at Kinsale, when, after their marvellous winter march, the two great Northern chiefs of Tirconnell and Tyrone had succeeded in relieving their Spanish allies there, was one of those events upon which the history of a nation turns. We know little more than that it was a night-attack, the secret of which had been divulged by a deserter. O'Donnell took shipping for Spain, where he died before the promised aid was furnished, in the twenty-ninth year of his age, September 10, 1602. King Philip caused him to be buried in the Cathedral of Valladolid, and raised there a monument in his honour. O'Neill fought his way back to Ulster. Lord Mountjoy had repeatedly wasted the country, so that a terrible famine reigned. Every day O'Neill was more strictly hemmed in ; while his allies deserted him and his retainers were starved. When the news arrived of the death of Red Hugh O'Donnell all hope was over. He agreed to the terms proposed to him by Mountjoy, surrendering his claims as a native prince, and engaging to resume his title as Earl of Tyrone. Several days previously the Queen had died ; but Mountjoy had concealed this event. A few days later the ships of O'Neill's Spanish allies arrived. He sent them back.

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*ROISIN DUBH.*

## DIRGE.

## I.

I AM black but fair, and the robe I wear  
Is dark as death ;  
My cheek is pale, and I bind my veil  
With a cypress wreath.  
Where the nightshades flower I build the bower  
Of my secret rest :  
O kind is sleep to the eyes that weep  
And the bleeding breast.

## II.

My palace floor I tread no more ;  
No throne is mine ;  
No sceptre I hold, nor drink from gold  
Of victory's wine ;  
Yet I rule a Queen in the worlds unseen  
By Sassanach eye ;  
A realm I have in the hearts of the brave  
And an empery.

*TO NUALA IN ROME.*

Nuala was the sister of Red Hugh, and of Roderick O'Donnell. The latter died an exile in Rome, A.D. 1608. Nuala left her husband, on his proving a traitor to his country, and gave to her brother. It was on finding her weeping at that brother's grave in S. Pietro Montorio, that O'Donnell's bard addressed to her the tragic ode well known through Clarence Mangan's translation : 'O Woman of the Piercing Wail !'

THY shining eyes are vague with tears  
Though seldom and unseen they flow ;  
The playmate of thy childish years—  
My friend—at last lies low.

If I, thus late, thy love might win  
Withheld for his sake, brief the gain ;  
I live in battle's ceaseless din :  
Thou pinest in silent pain.

Nuala ! exile, and the bread  
By strangers doled thy cheek make pale ;  
On blue Lough Eirne that cheek was red,  
In western Ruaidh's gale !

The high-neck'd stag looks down no more  
From sunset cliffs upon thy path  
In Doire. Not now thou tread'st the shore  
By Aileach's royal Rath.

No more thou hear'st the sea-wind sing  
O'er cairns where Ulster monarchs sleep ;  
The linnets of the Latian spring  
They only make thee weep.

To thee no joy from domes enskied,  
Or ruins of Imperial Rome ;  
Thou look'st beyond them, hungry-eyed,  
T'ward thy far Irish home.

On green Tirconnell, now a waste,  
The sighs of outcasts feed thine own ;  
Nuala ! soon my clarion's blast  
Shall drown that mingled moan.

In Spain they call us King and Prince,  
And plight alliance, and betray ;

In Rome, through clouds of frankincense  
Slow dawns our better day.

To King or Kaiser, Prince or Pope  
I sue not, nor to magic spell ;  
Nuala ! on this sword my Hope  
Stands like a God. Farewell !

---

*THE ARRAIGNMENT ;*

OR, FIRST AND LAST.

Thus sang thy missioned Bard, O'Neill,  
At James's Court a threatening guest,  
When Ulster died. Round ranks of steel  
Ran the sharp whisper ill suppressed.

Ho ! space for Judgment ! squire and groom !  
Ho ! place for Judgment—and a bier !  
We bear a dead man to his tomb :  
We ask for Judgment, not a tear.

Back, beaming eyes, and cloth of gold,  
Back, plumes, and stars, and herald's gear,  
Injustice crowned, and falsehood stoled !  
There lies a lordlier pageant here !

Draw near, Sir King, and lay thy hand  
Upon this dead man's breast ! Draw near !  
The accusing blood, at God's command,  
Wells forth ! The count is summed. Give ear !

Who, partner with a knave abhorred,\*  
Farmed as his own that Traitor's feud ?  
Vicarious fought ? By others' sword  
Mangled a kingdom unsubdued ?

Who reigned in great Religion's name,  
Liegeman and Creedsman of the Pope ?  
Who vindicates his cleric claim  
By schism and rapine, axe and rope ?

Who reads by light of blazing roofs  
His gospel new to Prince and Kerne ?  
Who tramples under horses' hoofs  
A race expatriate, slow to learn ?

From holy Ulster, last discrowned—  
'Twas falsehood did the work, not war—  
Who drives her sons by scourge and hound  
To famished Connacht's utmost shore ?

Beware false splendours brave to-day !  
Unkingly King, and recreant peers !  
Ye hold your prey ; but not for aye :  
The hour is yours : but ours the years !

---

\* Dermot, King of Leinster, A.D. 1170.

## *THE SUPPRESSION OF THE FAITH IN ULSTER.*

A BARDIC ODE.

A.D. 1623.

Throughout Ulster, and in most parts of Ireland, it had been found impossible to carry the Penal Laws against the Catholic faith fully into effect until the reign of James I. The accession of that prince was hailed as the beginning of an era of liberty and peace. James had ever boasted himself a descendant of the ancient Milesian princes, had had frequent dealings with the Irish chiefs in their wars against Elizabeth, and was believed by them to be, at least in heart, devoted to the religion of his Mother. In the earlier part of his reign, though he refused to grant a legal toleration, he engaged that the Penal Laws should not be executed. In the year 1605 a proclamation was issued, commanding all Catholic priests to quit Ireland under the penalty of death. Next came the compulsory flight of Tirconnell and Tyrone, the Plantation of Ulster, and the swamping of the Irish Parliament by the creation of fictitious boroughs. In 1622 Archbishop Ussher preached before the new Deputy, Lord Faulkland, his celebrated sermon on the text, 'He beareth not the sword in vain.' The next year a new proclamation was published, commanding the departure of all the Catholic clergy, regular and secular, within forty days.

### I.

Now we know that they are dead !  
They, the Chiefs that kept from scaith  
The northern land—the sentenced Faith—  
Now we know that they are dead !

### II.

Wrong, with Rapine in her leash,  
Walk'd her ancient rounds afresh !  
Law—late come—with leaden mace  
Smites Religion in the face ;—  
But the spoiler first had place !

## III.

Axes and hammers, hot work and hard !

From niche and from turret the Saints they cast ;  
The church stands naked as the churchyard ;

The craftsman-army toils fiercely and fast :  
They pluck from the altars the precious stones

As vultures pluck at a dead man's eyes ;  
Like wolves down-dragging the flesh from the bones

They strip the gold from the canopies.  
They rifle the tombs ; they melt the bells :  
The foundry furnace bubbles and swells !—  
Spoiler, for once thou hast err'd ; what ho !  
Thou hast loos'd this shaft from an ill-strung bow !  
In that Faith thou wouldst strangle, thy Mother died !  
Who slew her ? The Usurper our chiefs defied !  
Thy heart was with Rome in the days of old ;  
Thy counsel was ours ; thy counsel and gold !

## IV.

A ban went forth from the regal chambers,

From the Prince that courted us once with lies,  
From the secular synods where he who clambers,

Not he that walks upright, receives the prize :

'Go back to thy Judah, sad Prophet, go ;

There wail thy wrong, and denounce thy woe ;

But no longer in Bethel thy prophecy sing,

'Tis the chapel and court of Samaria's King !'

—Let England renounce her church at will,

The children of Erin are faithful still.

For a thousand years has that church been theirs :—

They are God's, not Cæsar's, the Creeds and Prayers !

## V.

Thou that are haughty and full of bread,  
 The crown falls soon from the unwise head !  
 Who rear strange altars shall find anon  
 The lion thereby and sea-sand thereon !  
 In the deserts of penance they peak and pine  
 Till fulfilled are the days of the wrath divine.  
 Thy covenant make with the cave and the brier  
 For shelter by day and by night for fire ;  
 When the bolt is launch'd at the craggy crest,  
 And the cedars flame round the eagle's nest !

## VI.

A voice from the ocean waves,  
 And a voice from the forest glooms,  
 And a voice from old temples and kingly graves,  
 And a voice from the Catacombs !  
 It cries, the king that warreth  
 On religion and freedom entwined in one  
 Down drags in his blindness the fane, nor spareth  
 The noble's hall, nor the throne !  
 I saw in my visions the walls give way  
 Of the mystic Babylon ;  
 I saw the gold Idol whose feet are clay  
 On his forehead lying prone ;  
 I saw a sea-eagle defaced with gore  
 Flag wearily over the main ;  
 But her nest on the cliff she reached no more  
 For the shaft was in her brain.  
 As when some strong man a stone uplifteth  
 And flingeth into floods far down,  
 So God, when the balance of Justice shifteth,  
 Down dasheth the despot's crown,

Down dasheth the realm that abused its trust,  
 And the nation that knew not pity,  
 And maketh the image of Power unjust  
 To vanish from out the city !

## VII.

Wait, my country, and be wise ;—  
 Thou art gall'd in head and breast,  
 Rest thou needest, sleep and rest ;  
 Rest and sleep, and thou shalt rise  
 And tread down thine enemies.  
 That which God ordains is best ;  
 That which God permits is good,  
 Though by man least understood.  
 Now His sword He gives to those  
 Who have wisdom won from woes ;  
 In them fighting ends the strife :  
 At other times the impious priest  
 Slipping on his victim's blood  
 Falls in death on his own knife !  
 God is hard to 'scape ! His ire !  
 Strikes the son if not the sire ! \*  
 In a time, to God not long,  
 Thou shalt reckon with this wrong !

---

\* King James I.'s 'Plantation of Ulster' was the loss of Ireland to his son, and again to his grandson, and consequently the permanent loss to him and his of England.



*KING CHARLES'S 'GRACES.'*

A.D. 1626.

## I.

THUS babble the strong ones, 'The chain is slacken'd !  
Ye can turn half round on your side to sleep !  
With the thunder-cloud still your isle is blacken'd ;  
But it hurls no bolt upon tower or steep.  
Ye are slaves in name : old laws proscribe you ;  
But the King is kindly, the Queen is fair ;  
They are knaves or fools who would goad or bribe  
you  
A legal freedom to claim ! Beware !'

## II.

We answer thus : our country's honour  
To us is dear as our country's life !  
That stigma the foul law casts upon her  
Is the brand on the fame of a blameless wife !  
Once more we answer : from honour never  
Can safety long time be found apart :  
The bondsman that vows not his bond to sever,  
Is a slave by right and a slave in heart !

---

*SIBYLLA IERNENSIS.*

## I.

I DREAM'D. Great bells around me peal'd ;  
The world in that sad chime was drown'd ;  
Sharp cries as from a battle-field  
Were strangled in that wondrous sound :

Had all the Kings of earth lain dead,  
Had nations borne them lapp'd in lead  
To torch-lit vaults with plume and pall,  
Such bells had served for funeral.

## II.

'Twas work of phantasy ! I slept  
Where black Baltard o'erlooks the deep ;  
Plunging all night the billows kept  
Their ghostly vigil round my sleep.  
But I had fed on tragic lore  
That day—your annals, 'Masters Four !'  
And every moan of wind and sea  
Was as a funeral chime to me.

## III.

I woke. In vain the skylark sang  
Above the breezy cliff ; in vain  
The golden iris flashed and swang  
In hollows of the sea-pink plain.  
As ocean shakes—no longer near—  
The listening heart, and haunts the ear,  
The Sibyl and that volume's spells  
Pursued me with those funeral bells !

## IV.

The Irish Sibyl whispers slow  
To one who pass'd her tardy Lent  
In purple and fine linen, 'Lo !  
Thou would'st amend—but not repent !  
Beware ! Long prospers fearless crime ;  
Half courses bring the perilous time !  
His way who changes, not his will,  
Is strong no more, but guilty still.'

*THE BALLAD OF 'BONNY PORTMORE';\**

OR, THE WICKED REVENGE.

A.D. 1641.

## I.

SHALL I breathe it ? Hush ! 'twas dark :—

Silence !—few could understand :—

Needful deeds are done—not told.

In your ear a whisper ! Hark !

'Twas a sworn, unwavering band

Marching through the midnight cold ;

Rang the frost plain, stiff and stark :

By us, blind, the river rolled.

## II.

Silence ! we were silent then :

Shall we boast and brag to-day ?

Just deeds, blabbed, have found their price !

Snow made dumb the trusty glen ;

Now and then a starry ray

Showed the floating rafts of ice :

Worked our oath in heart and brain :

Twice we halted : only twice.

## III.

When we reached the city wall

On their posts the warders slept :

By the moat the rushes plained :

Hush ! I tell you part, not all !

Through the water-weeds we crept ;

Soon the sleepers' tower was gained.

My sister's son a tear let fall—

Righteous deeds by tears are stained.

\* The name of an old Irish air.

## IV.

Round us lay a sleeping city :  
Had they wakened we had died :  
Innocence sleeps well, they say.  
Pirates, traitors, base banditti,  
Blood upon their hands undried,  
'Mid their spoils asleep they lay !  
Murderers ! Justice murders pity !  
Night had brought their Judgment Day !

## V.

In the castle, here and there,  
'Twixt us and the dawning East  
Flashed a light, or sank by fits :  
'Patience, brothers ! sin it were  
Lords to startle at their feast,  
Sin to scare the dancers' wits !'  
Patient long in forest lair  
The listening, fire-eyed tiger sits !

## VI.

O the loud flames upward springing !  
O that first fierce yell within,  
And, without, that stormy laughter !  
Like rooks across a sunset winging  
Dark they dashed through glare and din  
Under rain of beam and rafter !  
O that death-shriek heavenward ringing ;  
O that wondrous silence after !

The fire-glare showed, 'mid glaze and blister,  
A boy's cheek wet with tears. 'Twas base !  
That boy was firstborn of my sister ;  
Yet I smote him on the face !

Ah ! but when the poplars quiver  
 In the hot noon, cold o'erhead,  
 Sometimes with a spasm I shiver ;  
 Sometimes round me gaze with dread.  
 Ah ! and when the silver willow  
 Whitens in the moonlight gale,  
 From my hectic, grassy pillow  
 I hear, sometimes, that infant's wail !

---

*THE INTERCESSION.\**

ULSTER.

A.D. 1641.

\* Dr. Leland and other historians relate that the Catholic clergy frequently interfered for the protection of the victims of that massacre, which took place at an early period of the Ulster rising of 1641. They hid them beneath their altars. From the landing of Owen Roe O'Neill all such crimes ceased. They disgraced a just cause, and, doubtless, drew down a Divine punishment. A lamentable list of the massacres committed in the same year, at *the other side*—massacres less generally known—will be found in Cardinal Moran's 'Persecutions suffered by the Catholics under Cromwell and the Puritans,' p. 168. It is compiled from a contemporary record.

It was intended that Inisfail should represent in the main the songs of the old Irish Bards (if only they could have been preserved), as the best exponent of the Emotions and Imagination of the Race during the centuries of her affliction, but there must have been also many Priests, like Iriel, who were exponents not less true of the Conscience of that Race. To such may be attributed the counsels urged upon them in many parts of Inisfail, and especially towards its close, respecting the forgiveness of injuries, obedience to the Divine Will, Penitence, especially from p. 125 to p. 129 a Hope that nothing could subdue, and those trials connected with the day of Prosperity which are more dangerous than any which Adversity knows.

IRIEL the Priest arose and said :

‘ The just cause never shall prosper by wrong !  
The ill cause battens on blood ill shed ;  
’Tis Virtue only makes Justice strong.

‘ I have hidden the Sassanach’s wife and child  
Beneath the altar ; behind the porch ;  
O’er them that believe not these hands have piled  
The copes and the vestments of Holy Church !

‘ I have hid three men in a hollow oak ;  
I have hid three maids in an ocean cave : ’  
As though he were lord of the thunder-stroke  
The old Priest lifted his hand—to save.

But the people loved not the words he spake ;  
And their face was changed for their heart was  
sore :

They spake no word ; but their brows grew black  
And the hoarse halls roar’d like a torrent’s roar.

‘ Has the Stranger robb’d you of house and land ?  
In battle meet him and smite him down !  
Has he sharpen’d the dagger ? Lift ye the brand !  
Has he bound your Princes ? Set free the clown !

‘ Has the Stranger his country and knighthood  
shamed ?

Though he ’scape God’s vengeance so shall not ye !  
*His own* God chastens ! Be never named  
With the Mullaghmast slaughter ! Be just and  
free ! ’

But the people received not the words he spake,  
For the wrong on their heart had made it sore ;

And their brows grew black like the stormy rack  
 And the hoarse halls roar'd like the wave-wash'd  
 shore.

Then Iriel the Priest put forth a curse !  
 And horror crept o'er them from vein to vein ;—  
 A curse upon man and a curse upon horse,  
 As forth they rode to the battle-plain.

And there never came to them luck or grace  
 No Saint in the battle-field help'd them more  
 Till O'Neill who hated the warfare base  
 Had landed at Doe on Tirconnell's shore.

### *THE SILK OF THE KINE.\**

DIRGE OF RORY O'MORE.

A.D. 1642.

Up the sea-sadden'd valley at evening's decline  
 A heifer walks lowing ; ' the Silk of the Kine ;'  
 From the deep to the mountain she roams, and again  
 From the mountain's green urn to the purple-rimm'd  
 main.

Whom seek'st thou, sad Mother ? Thine own is not  
 thine !  
 He dropp'd from the headland ; he sank in the brine.  
 'Twas a dream ! but in dream at thy foot did he  
 follow  
 Through the meadow-sweet on by the marish and  
 mallow !

\* One of the mystical names for Ireland used by the Bards.

Was he thine? Have they slain him? Thou seek'st  
 him, not knowing  
 Thyself too art theirs, thy sweet breath and sad  
 lowing!  
 Thy gold horn is theirs; thy dark eye, and thy silk!  
 And that which torments thee, thy milk, is their milk!  
 'Twas no dream, Mother Land! 'Twas no dream,  
 Inisfail!  
 Hope dreams, but grief dreams not—the grief of the  
 Gael!  
 From Leix and Ikerren to Donegal's shore  
 Rolls the dirge of thy last and thy bravest—O'More!

---

## *THE BATTLE OF BENBURB.*

### A BARDIC ODE.

This battle was won by Owen Roe O'Neill over the Parliamentary forces, A.D. 1646. The rebels left 3,423 of their dead on the field.

#### I.

At even I mused on the wrong of the Gael;—  
 A storm rushed beside me with war-blast not wail,  
 And the leaves of the forest plague-spotted and dead  
 Like a multitude broken before it fled;  
 Then I saw in my visions a host back driven  
 Ye clansmen be true, by a Chief from heaven!

#### II.

At midnight I gazed on the moonless skies;—  
 There glisten'd, supreme of star-blazonries,  
 A Sword all stars; then heaven, I knew,  
 Hath holy work for a sword to do:  
 Be true, ye clansmen of Nial! Be true!



## III.

At morning I look'd as the sun uprose  
 On hills of Antrim late white with snows ;  
 Was it morning only that dyed them red ?  
 Martyr'd hosts, methought, had bled  
 On their sanguine ridges for years not few !  
 Ye clansmen of Conn, this day be true !

## IV.

There is felt once more on the earth  
 The step of a kingly man :  
 Like a dead man hidden he lay from his birth,  
 Exiled from his country and clan :  
 This day his standard he flingeth forth ;  
 He tramples the bond and ban :  
 Let them look in his face that usurp'd his hearth !  
 Let them vanquish him, they who can !  
 Owen Roe, our own O'Neill !  
 He treads once more our land !  
 The sword in his hand is of Spanish steel,  
 But the hand is an Irish hand !

## V.

I saw in old time with these eyes that fail \*  
 The ship drop down Lough Swilly ;  
 Lessening 'mid billows the snowy sail  
 Bent down like a storm-rock'd lily !

\* In 1607 a conspiracy, never proved, and probably never undertaken, was suddenly charged against Tyrone and Tirconnell. To avoid arrest the two earls, whose enforced submission had rendered them helpless, embarked on board a ship that chanced to have anchored in Lough Swilly. They found refuge in Rome, where their tombs are shown to the traveller in the church of San Pietro, on the Janiculan Hill.

The Four Masters thus record the tragedy :—‘ They embarked

Far, far it bore them, those Sceptres old  
That ruled o'er Ulster for ages untold,  
The sceptre of Nial and the sceptre of Conn,  
Thy Princes, Tirconnell and green Tyrone !  
No freight like that since the mountain-pine  
Left first the hills for the salt sea-brine !  
Down sank on the ocean a blood-red sun  
As westward they drifted, when hope was none,  
With their priests and their children o'er ocean's  
foam  
And every archive of house and home :  
Amid the sea-surges their bards sang dirges :  
God rest their bones in their graves at Rome !  
Owen Roe, our own O'Neill !  
He treads once more our land !  
The sword in his hand is of Spanish steel,  
But the hand is an Irish hand !

## VI.

I saw in old time through the drifts of the snow  
A shepherdless People dash'd to and fro,  
With hands toss'd up in the wintry air,  
With the laughter of madness or shriek of despair.  
Dispersed is the flock when the shepherd lies low :  
The sword was of parchment : a lie was the blow :

---

on the festival of Holy Cross, in autumn. This was a princely company : and it is certain that the sea has not borne and the wind has not wafted in modern times a number of persons in one ship more eminent, illustrious, or noble in race, heroic deeds, valour, feats of arms, and brave achievements than they. Would that God had but permitted them to remain in their patrimonial inheritance until the children had arrived at the age of manhood ! Woe to the heart that meditated, woe to the counsel that recommended the project of this expedition !'

What is Time? I can see the rain beat the white  
hair,

And the sleet that defaces the face that was fair,  
As onward they stagger o'er mountain and moor  
From the Ardes and Rathlin to Corrib's bleak shore :  
I can hear the babe weep in the pause of the wind—  
'To Connaught!' The bloodhounds are baying be-  
hind!—

Owen Roe, our own O'Neill !

He treads once more our land !

The sword in his hand is of Spanish steel,

But the hand is an Irish hand !

#### VII.

Visions no more of the dreadful past !  
The things that I long'd for are mine at last !  
I see them and hold them with heart and eyes ;  
On Irish ground, under Irish skies,  
An Irish army, clan by clan,  
The standard of Ulster on leading the van !  
Each chief with his clansmen, tried men like steel ;  
Unvanquish'd Maolmora, Cormac the leal !  
And the host that meets them right well I know,  
The psalm-singing boors of that Scot, Munro !  
—We hated you, Barons of the Pale !  
But now sworn friends are Norman and Gael ;  
For both the old foes are of lineage old,  
And both the old Faith and old manners hold.  
Montgomery, Conway ! base-born crew !  
This day ye shall learn an old lesson anew !  
Thou art red with sunset this hour, Blackwater  
But twice ere now thou wert red with slaughter !  
Another O'Neill by the ford they met ;  
And 'the bloody loaming' men name it yet !

Owen Roe, our own O'Neill !

He treads once more our land !

The sword in his hand is of Spanish steel !

But the hand is an Irish hand !

VIII.

The storm of the battle rings out ! On ! on !

Shine well in their faces, thou setting sun !

The smoke grows crimson : from left to right

Swift flashes the spleenful and racing light :

The horses stretch forward with belly to ground :

On ! on ! like a lake which has burst its bound !

Through the clangour of brands rolls the laughter of  
cannon :

Wind-borne it shall reach thine old walls, Dun-  
gannon !

Armagh's grey Minster shall chant again

To-morrow at vespers an ancient strain !

On, on ! This night on thy banks, Loch Neagh

Men borne in bondage shall couch them free !

On, warriors launch'd by a warrior's hand !

Four years ye were leash'd in a brazen band ;

He counted your bones, and he meted your might,

This hour he dashes you into the fight !

Strong sun of the battle, great Chief whose eye

Wherever it gazes makes victory,

This hour thou shalt see them do or die !

—They form : there stand they one moment, still !

Now, now, they charge under banner and sign :

They breast unbroken the slope of the hill,

It breaks before them, the Invaders' line !

Their horse and their foot are crush'd together

Like harbour-locked ships in the winter weather,

Each dash'd upon each, the churn'd wave strewing

With wreck upon wreck, and ruin on ruin.  
 The spine of their battle gives way with a yell :  
 Down drop their standards : that cry was their knell !  
 Some on the bank and some in the river  
 Struggling they lie that shall rally never.  
 'Twas God fought for us ! with hands of might  
 From on high He kneaded and shaped the fight !  
 To Him be the praise ! What He wills must be :  
 With Him is the future : for blind are we !  
 Let Ormond at will make terms or refuse them !  
 Let Charles the Confederates win or lose them ;  
 Unbind the old Faith and annul the old strife,  
 Or cheat us, and forfeit his kingdom and life !  
 Come hereafter what must or may  
 Ulster, thy cause is avenged to-day :  
 What fraud took from us and force, the sword  
 That strikes in daylight makes ours, restored !  
     Owen Roe, our own O'Neill !  
     He treads once more our land !  
 The sword in his hand is of Spanish steel,  
     But the hand is an Irish hand !

---

*TRADITOR ISTE.*

A WAIL.

I.

CAN it be, can it be ? Can our Great One be  
 Traitor ?

Can the child of her greatest be faithless to Eire ?

The clown and the stranger have wronged—let them  
hate her !

Old Thomond well knows them ; they hate her  
for hire !

Can a brave man be leagued with the rebels and  
rangers

'Gainst his faith, and his country, his king, and  
his race,

Can he bear the low moanings, the curses, the  
banterers ?—

There's a scourge worse than these—the applause  
of the base !

## II.

Was the hand that set fire to the Churches de-  
scended

From his hand who upreared them—the strong  
hand, the true ?

When the blood of the People and Priesthood ran  
blended

Who was it looked on, and cried, 'Spare them  
not' ? Who ?

Some Fury o'erruled thee ! Some root thou hadst  
eaten !

'Twas a Demon that stalked in thy shape. 'Twas  
not thou !

Not tears of the Angels that blood-stain can  
sweeten ;

That Cain-mark not death can erase from thy  
brow !

---

*DIRGE OF OWEN ROE O'NEILL.*

A.D. 1649.

So, 'tis over ! Lift the dead !  
Bear him to his place of rest,  
Broken heart, and blighted head :  
Lay the Cross upon his breast.

There be many die too late ;  
Here is one that died too soon : \*  
'Twas not Fortune—it was Fate  
After him that cast her shoon.

Toll the church bells slowly : toll !  
God this day is wroth with Eire :  
Seal the book, and fold the scroll ;  
Crush the harp, and burst the wire.

Lords and priests, ye talked and talked  
In Kilkenny's Council Hall ;  
But this man whose game ye baulked  
Was the one man 'mong you all !

'Twas not in the field he fell !  
Sing his requiem, dark-stoled choir !  
Let a nation sound his knell :  
God this day is wroth with Eire !

\* The conqueror of Benburb died (by poison as was believed at the time) just after he and Ormond had concluded terms for joint action against Cromwell. Had he not been summoned to Kilkenny when on the point of following up the victory of Benburb, the Puritan army must, within a few days, have been driven out of Ulster.

*THE BISHOP OF ROSS.*

A.D. 1650.

THEY led him to the peopled wall :

‘Thy sons!’ they said, ‘are those within !  
If at thy word their standards fall,  
Thy life and freedom thou shalt win !’

Then spake that warrior Bishop old,  
‘Remove these chains that I may bear  
My crosier staff and cope of gold :  
My judgment then will I declare.’

They robed him in his robes of state :  
They set his mitre on his head :  
On tower and gate was silence great :  
The hearts that loved him froze with dread.

He spake : ‘Right holy is your strife !  
Fight for your Country, King, and Faith.  
I taught you to be true in life :  
I teach you to be true in death.

‘A priest apart by God is set  
To offer prayer and sacrifice :  
And he is sacrificial yet  
The pontiff for his flock who dies.’

Ere yet he fell, his hand on high  
He raised, and benediction gave ;  
Then sank in death, content to die :  
Thy great heart, Erin, was his grave.

---



*DIRGE.*

A.D. 1652.

## I.

WHOSE were they those voices? What footsteps  
came near me?

Can the dead to the living draw nigh and be  
heard?

I wept in my sleep; but ere morning to cheer me  
Came a breeze from the woodland, a song from the  
bird.

O sons of my heart! the long-hair'd, the strong-  
handed!

Your phantoms rush by me with war-cry and  
wail:

Ye too for your Faith and your Country late banded  
My sons by adoption, mail'd knights of the Pale!

## II.

Is there sorrow, O ye that pass by, like my sorrow?  
Of the Kings I brought forth there remaineth not  
one!

Each day is dishonour'd; disastrous each morrow:

In the yew-wood I couch till the daylight is done.

At midnight I lean from the cliff o'er the waters,

And hear, as the thunder comes up from the sea

Your moanings, my sons, and your wailings, my  
daughters:

With the sea-dirge they mix not: they clamour to  
me!

---

*THE WHEEL OF AFFLICTION.*

BRIGHT is the Dream-land of them that weep ;  
Of the outcast head on the mountains bare :  
Thy Saints, O Eire, I have seen in sleep ;  
Thy Queens on the battle-plain, fierce yet fair.

Three times I dreamed on Tyrawley's shore :  
Through ranks of the Vanished I paced a mile :  
On the right stood Kings, and their crowns they  
wore :  
On the left stood Priests without gold or guile.  
But the vision I saw when the deep I crossed,  
When I crossed from Iorras to Donegal  
By night on the vigil of Pentecost  
Was the saddest vision yet best of all.

From the sea to the sky a Wheel rolled round :  
It breathed a blast on the steadfast stars ;  
'Twas huge as that circle with marvels wound—  
The marvels that reign o'er the Calendars.

Then an Angel spake, 'That Wheel is Earth ;  
It grinds the wheat of the Bread of God :'  
And the Angel of Eire, with an Angel's mirth,  
'The mill-stream from Heaven is the Martyrs'  
blood.'

---

*EPILOGUE.*

LIKE dew from above it fell, from beyond the limits  
of ether ;  
From above the courses of stars, and the thrones of  
angelical choirs ;

‘If God afflicts the Land, then God of a surety is  
with her ;

Her heart-drops counts like beads, and walks with  
her through the fires.

‘Time, and a Time, and Times ! Earth’s noblest  
birth was her latest :

That latest birth was Man ; his flesh her Redeemer  
wears :

Time, and a Time, and Times ! one day the least  
shall be greatest :

In glory God reaps, but sows below in the valley  
of tears.’

It was no Seraph’s song nor the spherul chime of  
creation,

That Voice ! To earth it stooped as a cloud to the  
ocean flood :

It had ascended in sighs from the anguished heart of  
a nation ;—

The musical echo came back from the boundless  
bosom of God.

---



# INISFAIL

*A LYRICAL CHRONICLE OF IRELAND.*

THE ELEGY.

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## PART III.

1. THE PENAL LAWS.
2. THE VICTORY OF ENDURANCE.



## PART III.

### Prologue.

#### *PARVULI EJUS.*

IN the night, in the night, O my Country, the stream  
calls out from afar :

So swells thy voice through the ages, sonorous  
and vast :

IN the night, in the night, O my Country, clear flashes  
the star :

So flashes on me thy face through the gloom of the  
past.

I sleep not ; I watch : in blows the wind ice-wing'd,  
and ice-finger'd :

My forehead it cools and slakes the fire in my  
breast ;

Though it sighs o'er the plains where oft thine exiles  
look'd back, and long linger'd,

And the graves where thy famish'd lie dumb and  
thine outcasts find rest.

For up from those vales wherein thy brave and thy  
beautiful moulder,

And on through the homsteads waste and the  
temples defiled,

A voice goes forth on that wind, as old as the Islands  
and older,  
'God reigns : at His feet earth's Destiny sleeps  
like a child.'

---

*IN RUIN RECONCILED.*

A.D. 1660.

I HEARD a Woman's voice that wailed  
Between the sandhills and the sea :  
The famished sea-bird past me sailed  
Into the dim infinity.

I saw on boundless rainy moors  
Far off I saw a great Rock loom ;  
The grey dawn smote its iron doors ;  
And then I knew it for a Tomb.

Two queenly shapes before the grate  
Watched, couchant on the barren ground ;  
Two regal Shades in ruined state,  
One Gael ; one Norman ; both discrowned.

---

*THE CHANGED MUSIC.*

I.

THE shock of meeting clans is o'er :  
The knightly or the native shout  
Pursues no more by field or shore  
From rath to cairne, the ruined rout.



O'er dusty stalls old banners trail  
In mouldering fanes : while far beneath  
At last the Norman and the Gael  
Lie wedded in the caves of death.

## II.

No more the Bard-song ! dead the strains  
That mixed defiance, grief, and laugh :  
Old legends haunt no more the plains,  
Half saintly and barbaric half.  
Changed is the music. Sad and slow  
Beyond the horizon's tearful verge  
The elegiac wailings flow  
The fragments of the broken dirge.

---

*THE MINSTREL OF THE LATER DAY.*

## I.

WHAT art thou, O thou Loved and Lost  
That, fading from me, leav'st me bare ?  
The last trump of a vanquished host  
Far off expiring on the air  
So cheats in death the listener's ear  
As thou dost cheat this aching heart :—  
To me thy Past looked strangely near ;  
Distant and dim seems that thou art.

## II.

O Eire ! the things I loved in thee  
Were dead long years ere I was born :

Yet still their shadows lived for me  
An evening twilight like the morn ;  
But daily now with vulgarer hand  
The Present sweeps those phantoms by :—  
Like annals of an alien land  
Thy history's self appears to die.

---

## ODE.

*THE 'CURSE OF CROMWELL' ;*

OR, THE DESOLATION OF THE WEST.

IN trance I roamed that Land forlorn,  
By battle first, then famine worn ;  
I walked in gloom and dread :  
The Land remained : the hills were there :  
The vales : but few remained to share  
That realm untenanted.

Far-circling wastes, far-bending skies ;  
Clouds as at Nature's obsequies  
Slow trailing scarf and pall :  
In whistling winds on creaked the crane :  
Grey lakes upstared from moor and plain  
Like eyes on God that call.

Turn where I might, no blade of green  
Diversified the tawny scene :  
Bushless the waste, and bare :  
A dusky red the hills as though  
Some deluge ebbing years ago  
Had left but seaweed there.

Dark red the vales : that single hue  
O'er rotting swamps an aspect threw  
    Monotonous yet grand :  
Long-feared—for centuries in decay—  
Like a maimed lion there it lay,  
    What once had been a Land.

Yet, day by day, as dropt the sun  
A furnace glare through vapours dun  
    Illumed each mountain's head :  
Old tower and keep their crowns of flame  
That hour assumed ; old years of shame  
    Like fiends exorcised, fled.

That hour, from sorrow's trance awaking,  
My soul, like day from darkness breaking  
    With might prophetic fired  
To those red hills and setting suns  
Returned antiphonal response  
    As gleam by gleam expired.

And in my spirit grew and gathered  
Knowledge that Ireland's worst was weathered  
    Her last dread penance paid ;  
Conviction that for earthly scath  
In world-wide victories of her Faith  
    Atonement should be made.

That hour as one who walks in vision  
Of God's 'New Heavens' I had fruition  
    And saw, and inly burned :  
And I beheld the multitude  
Of those whose robes were washed in blood  
    Saw chains to sceptres turned !

And I saw Thrones, and Seers thereon  
Judging, and Tribes like snow that shone  
And diamond towers high-piled,  
Towers of that City theirs at last  
Through tribulations who have passed,  
And theirs, the undefiled.

A Land became a Monument !  
Man works ; but God's concealed intent  
Converts his worst to best :  
The first of Altars was a Tomb—  
Ireland ! thy grave-stone shall become  
God's Altar in the West !

---

*PEACE.*

SERAPH that from the blue abyss  
O'erlook'st the storms round earth that roll  
While we, by fragments wildered, miss  
The dread perfection of the whole  
Draw near at last ! A moment lean  
Upon that earth's tumultuous breast  
Thy hand heart-healing, and serene  
And grant the anguished planet rest !

---

*THE BALLAD OF THE LADY TURNED  
BEGGAR.*

The Irish who fought for Charles I., and whose estates were confiscated on that account, looked in vain, with a few exceptions, for their restoration on the accession of Charles II. The widow of one of these Royalists, Lord Roche, in her old age used to be seen begging in the streets of Cork.

I.

‘Drop an alms on shrunken fingers,’ faintly with a  
smile she said ;  
But the smile was not of pleasure, and unroselike was  
the red :  
‘Fasts wear thin the pride fantastic ;—one I left at  
home lacks bread.’

II.

Lady ! hard is the beginning — so they say — of  
shameless sinning :  
Ah but, loss disguised in winning, easier grows it  
day by day,  
May thy shamefaced, sinless pleading to the unhearing  
or the unheeding  
Lacerate less an inly bleeding bosom ere those locks  
grow grey ;  
Locks whose midnight once was lighted with the  
diamond’s changeful ray !

III.

Silks worn bare with work’s abusing ; cheek made  
wan with hailstorm’s bruising ;  
Eye its splendour slowly losing ; state less stately in  
decay ;

Chanting ballad or old ditty year by year she roam'd  
the city :

Love at first is kin to pity ; pity to contempt, men  
say ;

Wonder lessen'd, reverence slacken'd, as the raven  
locks grew grey.

## IV.

What is that makes sadness sadder ? What is that  
makes madness madder ?

Shame, a sharper-venomed adder, gnaws when looks  
once kind betray !

'She is poor : the poor are common ! 'Twas a  
countess : 'tis a woman ;

Looks she has at times scarce human : England !  
there should be her stay :

'Twas for Charles the old lord battled—Charles and  
England—so men say.'

## V.

Charles ! Whitehall ! the wine, the revel ! No, she  
sinks not to *that* level !

Mime or pander ; king or devil ; she will die on  
Ireland's shore !

Ne'er, till Portsmouth's brazen forehead grows with  
virtuous blushes florid

Will she pass that gate abhorrèd, climb that stair-  
case, tread that floor ;

Let *that* forehead wear the diamond which Lord  
Roche's widow wore !

## VI.

Critic guest through Ireland wending, careless praise  
with cavil blending,  
Wonder not, in old man bending, or in beggar boys  
at play,  
Wonder not at aspect regal, princely front or eye of  
eagle :  
Common these where baying beagle, or the wire-  
hair'd wolf-hound grey  
Chased old nobles once through woodlands which the  
ignoble made their prey.  
Centuries three that sport renewed they—thrice a  
century—so men say.

---

*THE IRISH SLAVE IN BARBADOES.*

BESIDE our shieling spread an oak,  
Close by, a beech, its brother :  
Between them rose the pale blue smoke ;  
They mingled each with other.

The gold mead stretched before our door  
Beyond the church-tower taper ;  
The river wound into the moor  
In distance lost and vapour.

Amid green hazels, cradle-swung,  
Our babe with rapture dancing,  
Watched furry shapes the roots among,  
With beaded eyes forth glancing.

Ah, years of blessing ! Rich no more  
Yet grateful and contented,  
The lands that Stafford from us tore  
No longer we lamented.

So fared it till that night of woe  
When, from the mountains blaring,  
The deep horns rang ‘The foe, the foe !’  
And fires were round us glaring.

He went : next day our hearth was cold,  
Then came that week of slaughter :—  
I woke within the ship’s black hold  
And heard the rushing water.

Ah ! those that seemed our life can die  
Yet we live on and wither !  
Fling out thy fires, thou Indian sky :  
Toss all thy torches hither !

Send, salt morass and swamps of cane  
Send forth your ambushed fever !  
O death, unstrain at last my chain  
And bid me rest for ever !

---

### ARCHBISHOP PLUNKET.

(THE LAST VICTIM OF THE ‘POPISH PLOT.’)

JULY 11, A.D. 1681.

‘The Earl of Essex went to the king (Charles II.) to apply for a pardon, and told his Majesty “the witnesses must needs be perjured, as what they swore could not possibly be true.” But his Majesty answered in a passion, “Why did you not declare this, then, at the trial? I dare pardon nobody—his blood be upon your head, and not mine!”’—*Haverty’s History of Ireland*. See also Cardinal Moran’s *Life of Archbishop Plunket*.



WHY crowd ye windows thus, and doors ?  
 Why climb ye tower and steeple ?  
 What lures you forth, O senators ?  
 What goads you here, O people ?

Here there is nothing worth your note—  
 'Tis but an old man dying :  
 The noblest stag this season caught  
 And in the old nets lying !

Sirs, there are marvels, but not here :  
 Here's but the threadbare fable  
 Whose sense nor sage discerns, nor seer ;  
 Unwilling is unable !

That prince who lurk'd in bush and brake  
 While bloodhounds bay'd behind him  
 Now, to his father's throne brought back,  
 In pleasure's mesh doth wind him.

The primate of that race, whose sword  
 Stream'd last to save that father,  
 To-day is reaping such reward  
 As Irish virtues gather.

His Faith King Charles partakes—and hides !  
 Ah, caitiff crowned, and craven !  
 Not his to breast the rough sea tides ;  
 He rocks in peaceful haven.

Great heart ! Pray well in heaven this night  
 From dungeon loosed, and hovel,  
 For souls that blacken in God's light,  
 That know the Truth, yet grovel.

*A BALLAD OF SARSFIELD;*

OR, THE BURSTING OF THE GUNS.

A.D. 1690.

SARSFIELD rode out the Dutch to rout,  
And to take and break their cannon ;  
To mass went he at half-past three,  
And at four he cross'd the Shannon.

Tirconnel slept. In dream his thoughts  
Old fields of victory ran on ;  
And the chieftains of Thomond in Limerick's towers  
Slept well by the banks of Shannon.

He rode ten miles and he cross'd the ford,  
And couch'd in the wood and waited ;  
Till, left and right, on march'd in sight  
That host which the true men hated.

'Charge !' Sarsfield cried ; and the green hill-side  
As they charged replied in thunder ;  
They rode o'er the plain and they rode o'er the slain,  
And the rebel rout lay under !

He burn'd the gear the knaves held dear,  
For his King he fought, not plunder ;  
With powder he cramm'd the guns, and ramm'd  
Their mouths the red soil under.

The spark flash'd out like a nation's shout  
The sound into heaven ascended ;  
The hosts of the sky made to earth reply  
And the thunders twain were blended !

Sarsfield rode out the Dutch to rout,  
And to take and break their cannon ;—  
A century after, Sarsfield's laughter  
Was echoed from Dungannon.

---

*A BALLAD OF ATHLONE;*

OR, HOW THEY BROKE DOWN THE BRIDGE.

DOES any man dream that a Gael can fear ?  
Of a thousand deeds let him learn but one !  
The Shannon swept onward, broad and clear  
Between the leaguers and worn Athlone.

‘ Break down the bridge ! ’ Six warriors rushed  
Through the storm of shot and the storm of shell :  
With late, but certain, victory flushed  
The grim Dutch gunners eyed them well.

They wrenched at the planks ’mid a hail of fire :  
They fell in death, their work half done :  
The bridge stood fast ; and nigh and nigher  
The foe swarmed darkly, densely on.

‘ O who for Erin will strike a stroke ?  
Who hurl yon planks where the waters roar ? ’  
Six warriors forth from their comrades broke  
And flung them upon that bridge once more.

Again at the rocking planks they dashed ;  
And four dropped dead ; and two remained :  
The huge beams groaned, and the arch down-  
crashed ;—  
Two stalwart swimmers the margin gained.

St. Ruth in his stirrups stood up and cried,  
‘I have seen no deed like that in France!’  
With a toss of his head Sarsfield replied  
‘They had luck, the dogs! ’Twas a merry chance!’

O many a year upon Shannon’s side  
They sang upon moor and they sang upon heath  
Of the twain that breasted that raging tide,  
And the ten that shook bloody hands with Death!

---

### *THE REQUITAL.*

#### I.

WE too had our day; it was brief: it is ended—  
· When a King dwelt among us; no strange King  
but ours!  
When the shout of a People delivered ascended  
And shook the broad banner that hung on his  
towers.  
We saw it like trees in a summer breeze shiver;  
We read the gold legend that blazoned it o’er:  
‘To-day; now or never! To-day and for ever!’  
O God, have we seen it to see it no more?

#### II.

How fared it that season, our lords and our masters,  
In that spring of our freedom how fared it with  
you?  
Did we trample your Faith? Did we mock your  
disasters?  
We restored but his own to the leal and the true.

Ye had fallen? 'Twas a season of tempest and troubles :

But against you we drew not that knife ye had drawn ;

In the war-field we met ; but your prelates and nobles

Stood up 'mid the senate in ermine and lawn !

---

### *THE LAST MAC CARTHYMORE.*

ON thy woody heaths, Muskerry—Carbery, on thy famish'd shore,

Hands hurl'd upwards, wordless wailings, clamour for Mac Carthymore !

He is gone ; and never, never shall return to wild or wood

Till the sun burns out in blackness and the moon descends in blood.

He, of lineage older, nobler, at the latest Stuart's side

Drew once more his father's sword for Charles in blood of traitors dyed :

Once again the stranger fattens where Mac Carthys ruled of old,

For a later Cromwell triumphs in the Dutchman's muddier mould.

Broken boat and barge around him, sea-gulls piping loud and shrill,

Sits the chief where bursts the breaker, and laments the sea-wind chill

In a barren northern island dinn'd by ocean's endless  
roar

Where the Elbe with all his waters streams between  
the willows hoar.

Earth is wide in hill and valley ; palace courts and  
convent piles

Centuries since received thine outcasts, Ireland, oft  
with tears and smiles :

Wherefore builds this grey-hair'd Exile on a rock-  
isle's weedy neck ?

Ocean unto ocean calleth ; inly yearneth wreck to  
wreck !

He and his, his Church and Country, King and kins-  
men, house and home,

Wrecks they are like broken galleys strangled by the  
yeasty foam :

Nations past and nations present are or shall be soon  
as these—

Words of peace to him come only from the breast of  
raging seas.

Clouds and sea-birds inland drifting o'er the sea-bar  
and sand-plain ;

Belts of mists for weeks unshifting ; plunge of de-  
vastating rain ;

Icebergs as they pass uplifting aguish gleams  
through vapours froze,

These, long years, were thy companions, O thou last  
Mac Carthymore !

When a rising tide at midnight rush'd against the  
downward stream

Rush'd not then the clans embattled meeting in the  
Chieftain's dream ?

When once more that tide exhausted died in mur-  
murs towards the main  
Died not then once more his slogan, ebbing far o'er  
hosts of slain ?

Pious river ! let us rather hope the low monotonies  
Of thy broad stream seaward toiling and the willow-  
bending breeze  
Charm'd at times a midday slumber, tranquillised  
tempestuous breath,  
Music last when harp was broken, requiem sad and  
sole in death.

---

## *A HUNDRED YEARS ;*

OR, RELIGIO NOVISSIMA.

THERE is an Order by a northern sea,  
Far in the West, of rule and life more strict  
Than that which Basil reared in Galilee,  
In Egypt Paul, in Umbria Benedict.

Discalced it walks ; a stony land of tombs  
A strange Petræa of late days, it treads !  
Within its court no high-tossed censer fumes ;  
The night-rain beats its cells, the wind its beds.

Before its eyes no brass-bound, blazon'd tome  
Reflects the splendour of a lamp high-hung :  
Knowledge is banish'd from her earliest home  
Like wealth : it whispers psalms that once it sung.

It is not bound by the vow celibate  
Lest, through its ceasing, anguish too might cease ;

In sorrow it brings forth ; and Death and Fate  
 Watch at Life's gate, and tithe the unripe in-  
 crease.

It wears not the Franciscan's cord or gown ;  
 The cord that binds it is the Stranger's chain :  
 Scarce seen for scorn, in fields of old renown  
 It breaks the clod ; another reaps the grain.

Year after year it fasts ; each third or fourth  
 So fasts that fasts of men to it are feast ;  
 Then of its brethren many in the earth  
 Are laid unrequiem'd like the mountain-beast.

Where are its cloisters ? Where the felon sleeps !  
 Where its novitiate ? Where the last wolf died !  
 From sea to sea its vigil long it keeps—  
 Stern Foundress ! is its Rule not mortified ?

Thou that hast laid so many an Order waste,  
 A Nation is thine Order ! It was thine  
 Wide as a realm that Order's seed to cast,  
 And undispensed sustain its discipline.

### *QUOMODO SEDET SOLA.*

How sits the City lonely and uncrowned ;  
 (Thus the old Priests renewed that Hebrew song) \*  
 She sits a widowed queen in weepings drowned ;  
 Her friends revile her who should mourn her wrong.

Behold, her streets are silent and her gate ;  
 And as the sea her sorrows are increased.

\* ' The Lamentations. '



The Daughter of my People, desolate ;  
And no man mounteth to her solemn feast.

To them that brought her comfort she hath said,  
‘ My children strove, and each by each is slain :  
I turned from Him to Whom my youth was wed :  
Therefore the heathen hosts my courts profane.

‘ The bruised reed He brake not ; neither cried,  
Nor strove, nor smote : He set the prisoners free :  
But sons of mine oppressed His poor, and lied,  
Nor walked in judgment and in equity.’

Thus sang the Priests, and ended, ‘ Christ was led  
Lamb-like to death. His mouth He opened not :  
He gave His life to raise from death the dead :  
That God Who sends our penance shared our lot.’

---

## *SPES UNICA.*

### I.

BETWEEN two mountains’ granite walls one star  
Shines in this sea-lake quiet as the grave ;  
The ocean moans against its rocky bar ;  
That star no reflex finds in foam or wave.

### II.

Saints of our country : if—no more a Nation—  
Vain are henceforth her struggles, from on high  
Fix in the bosom of her desolation  
So much the more that Hope which cannot die !

*SEDERUNT IN TERRA.*

‘THE Lord hath spread His net about her feet  
And down hath hurled her wall in heaps around ;’  
Thus sang her Elders, as their breasts they beat,  
Her virgins with their garlands on the ground.

‘The head of Sion to the dust is brought :  
Her Kings are slain or scattered by the sword :  
Her ancient Law is made a thing of nought :  
Her Prophets find not Vision from the Lord.

‘Because they showed thee not thy sin of old,  
Servants this day have lordship o’er thy race :  
From thine own wells thou draw’st thy drink for  
gold ;  
And Gentile standards mock thy Holy Place.

‘Thy little children made an idle quest—  
“Where—where is bread?” As wounded men  
they lay  
In every street. Upon their mothers’ breast  
At last they breathed their souls in death away.’

The Priests made answer, ‘Christ on Olivet  
Prayed to His Father. Pray thou well this day.  
His chalice passed Him not. Therefore thy debt  
Is cancelled. Watch with Him one hour, and pray.’

---

*DEEP CRIETH UNTO DEEP.*

## I.

BESIDE that Eastern sea—there first exalted—

Thus sang, not Bard, but Priest, ‘The Cross lies  
low!’

Sad St. Sophia, ’neath thy roofs gold-vaulted

Who kneels this hour? the blind and turban’d  
Foe!

## II.

O Eire! a sister hast thou in thy sorrow!

If thine the earlier, hers the bitterer moan:

She weeps to-day; great Rome may weep to-  
morrow!

Claim not that o’er-proud boast—to weep alone.

*ADHÆSIT LINGUA LACTANTIS.*

‘THY woes have made thy heart as iron hard:

Lo! the sea-monsters yield their young the breast;  
But thou the gates of thine increase hast barred;  
And scorn’st to grant thine offspring bread or rest.

‘Thy lordly ones within thy womb conceived

And nursed in scarlet, wither is thy drouth;  
The tongue of him, thy suckling babe, hath cleaved  
To that dry skin which roofed his milkless mouth.

‘Put down thy lips into the road-side dust;

And whisper softly through that dust, and say,  
“Although He slay me, yet in God I trust;  
He made, and can re-make me. Let Him slay!”

‘ Behold ! to tarry for the Lord is good ;  
His faithfulness for ever shall remain ;  
His mercies as the mornings are renewed :  
The man that waits Him shall not wait in vain.

‘ Within thy bones He made His fire to burn  
That thou might’st hate the paths thy feet have  
trod :  
Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return ;’  
Thus sang the Priests. ‘ Thy refuge is thy God.’

---

## *THE PROMISE.*

### I.

As the church-bells rolled forth their sonorous Evan-  
gel,  
Their last ere the Stranger usurped the old pile,  
I heard ’mid their clangour the voice of an Angel  
Give words to that music which rushed o’er the  
Isle :  
‘ In thousand-fold echoes, thy God, unforsaking,  
That peal shall send back from the heavenly  
bourne :  
O hearts that are broken, O hearts that are breaking,  
Be strong, for the glories gone by shall return.’

### II.

Thenceforth in the wood and the tempests that din it  
In the thunder of mountains the moan of the  
shore,  
That chime I can hear and the clear song within it  
The voice of that Angel who sings evermore,

‘The Faith shall grow vast though the Faithful grow fewer ;

By sorrow uplifted ascendeth *their* Throne  
Who resist the ill deed but not hate the ill-doer,  
Who forgive, unpartaking, all sins but their own.’

---

Only a reed that sighed—

And the Poplar grove hard by  
From a million of babbling mouths replied,  
‘Who cares, who cares? Not I!’

Only a dove’s low moan—

And the new-gorged raven near  
Let fall from the red beak the last white bone,  
And answered, half croak, half sneer.

Only the Silk of the Kine

Far driven on the foot that bled :  
And only old Argial’s bleeding pine ;  
And the Black Rose that once was red.

---

### ODE.

#### THE CYCLIC RENOVATION.

##### I.

THE unvanquish’d Land puts forth each year  
New growth of man and forest ;  
Her children vanish ; but on her,  
Stranger, in vain thou warrest !

She wrestles, strong through hope sublime,  
Thick darkness round her pressing  
Wrestles with God's great Angel, Time  
And wins, though maim'd, the blessing.

## II.

As night draws in what day sent forth  
As Spring is born of Winter  
As flowers that hide in parent earth  
Re-issue from the centre,  
Our Land takes back her wasted brood,  
Our Land in respiration,  
Breathes from her deep heart unsubdued  
A renovated nation !

## III.

A Nation dies : a People lives :—  
Through Signs Celestial ranging  
A Race's Destiny survives  
Unchanged, yet ever changing :  
The many-centuried Wrath goes by ;  
But while earth's tumult rages  
'In cœlo quies.' Burst and die  
Thou storm of temporal ages !

## IV.

Burst, and thine utmost fury wreak  
On things that are but seeming !  
First kill ; then die ; that God may speak,  
And man surcease from dreaming !  
That Love and Justice strong as love  
May be the poles unshaken  
Round which a world new-born may move  
And Truth that slept may waken !

*THE SPIRITUAL RENOVATION.*

## I.

THE Watchman stood on the turret :  
He looked to the south and the east :  
But the Kings of the south were sleeping,  
And the eastern Kings at feast.  
Not yet is thy help : not yet  
Hast thou paid the uttermost debt :  
Not reached is the worst, thou Weeper :—  
Though thy feet—God meteth their tread—  
Have dinted the green sea's bed,  
There are depths in the mid sea deeper !  
Not *all* God's waves and His billows  
As yet have gone over thy head,  
That Penance and Faith should be lords o'er Death,  
And that Hell should be vanquishèd.

## II.

I heard thine Angel that sighed  
Three times, ' Descend to the deep.'  
I heard at his side the Archangel that cried  
' To the depth that is under the deep.'  
Who made thee and shaped thee of old  
It is He in the darkness that lays thee  
With the cerements around thee ninefold ;  
That Earth, when the waking is thine,  
May look on His Hand divine,  
And answer, ' None other might raise thee

## III.

Noble, and Chieftain and Prince,  
They were thine in thy day, and died :

The head and the members were scattered long  
since !—

Shall a sinew, or nerve abide ?

So long as of that dead clay

Two atoms together cleave

God's trumpet that calls thee thou canst not obey,

His promise receive and believe.

So long as the seed, the husk,

The body of death, and the prison,

Holds out, undissolved, in the dusk

So long in his pains and his chains

The unglorified Spirit remains ;

The New Body unrisen.

---

### *A SONG OF THE BRIGADE.*

The Irish Brigade, consisting originally of soldiers of James II., took service with more than one continental sovereign. In many a land it made the name of Ireland famous. The Brigade was recruited from Ireland till the latter part of the eighteenth century, and it is said that, from first to last, nearly 500,000 men belonged to it.

I SNATCHED a stone from the bloodied brook

And hurled it at my household door !

No farewell of my love I took :

I shall see my friend no more.

I dashed across the churchyard bound :

I knelt not by my parents' graves :

There rang from my heart a clarion's sound

That summoned me o'er the waves.

No land to me can native be

That strangers trample and tyrants stain :



When the valleys I loved are cleansed and free  
They are mine, they are mine again !

Till then, in sunshine or sunless weather,  
By Seine and Loire, and the broad Garonne,  
My war-horse and I roam on together  
Wherever God wills. On ! on !

---

*A SONG OF THE BRIGADE.*

RIVER that through this purple plain  
Toilest—once redder—to the main  
Go, kiss for me the banks of Seine ;

Tell him I loved, and love for aye,  
That his I am though far away,  
More his than on the marriage-day.

Tell him thy flowers for him I twine  
When first the slow sad mornings shine  
In thy dim glass ; for he is mine.

Tell him when evening's tearful light  
Bathes those dark towers on Aughrim's height  
There where he fought in heart I fight.

A freeman's banner o'er him waves !  
So be it ! I but tend the graves  
Where freemen sleep whose sons are slaves.

Tell him I nurse his noble race  
Nor weep save o'er one sleeping face  
Wherein those looks of his I trace.

For him my beads I count when falls  
 Moonbeam or shower at intervals  
 Upon our burn'd and blacken'd walls :  
 And bless him ! bless the bold Brigade—  
 May God go with them, horse and blade,  
 For Faith's defence, and Ireland's aid !

---

*SONG.*

I.

Not always the winter ! not always the wail !  
 The heart heals perforce where the spirit is pure !  
 The apple smells sweet in the glens of Imayle ;  
 The blackbird sings loud by the Slane and the  
 Suir !  
 There are princes no more in Kincora and Tara,  
 But the gold-flower laughs out from the Mague at  
 Athdara ;  
 And the Spring-tide that wakens the leaf in the  
 bud,  
 Sad Mother, forgive us, shoots joy through our  
 blood !

II.

Not always the winter ! not always the moan !  
 Our fathers, they tell us, in old time were free :  
 Free to-day is the stag in the woods of Idrone,  
 And the eagle that fleets from Loch Lene o'er the  
 Lee !  
 The blue-bells rise up where the young May hath  
 trod ;  
 The souls of our martyrs are reigning with God !  
 Sad Mother, forgive us ! yon skylark no choice  
 Permits us ! From heaven he is crying ' Rejoice ! '

*A SONG OF THE BRIGADE.*

A.D. 1706.

## I.

WHAT sound goes up among the Alps !  
The shouts of Irish battle !  
The echoes reach their snowy scalps ;  
From cliff to cliff they rattle !  
In vain he strove—the Duke—Eugene :—  
That flying host to rally :  
The squadrons green, they swept it clean  
Beyond Marsiglia's valley.

## II.

Who fixed their standards on thy wall,  
Long-leaguered Barcelona !  
Unfallen, who saw the bravest fall ?  
Reply, betrayed Cremona !  
O graves of Sarsfield and of Clare !  
O Ramillies and Landen,\*  
Their brand we bear : their faith we share  
Their cause we'll ne'er abandon !

## III.

Years passed : again went by the Bard  
The law that banned him braving :  
Where blood of old had stained the sward  
Summer corn was waving :

\* O'Brien, Lord Clare, fell at the battle of Ramillies, A.D. 1706 ; Sarsfield, Earl of Lucan, on the field of Landen, A.D. 1693. Catching in his hand the blood that trickled from his death-wound, he exclaimed, 'O that this had been for Ireland !'

The tempest of a sudden joy  
Uplifting stave and stanza,  
The valleys echoed 'Fontenoy,'  
The wild sea-shore 'Almanza !'

---

*THE SEA-WATCHER.*

I.

THE crags lay dark in strange eclipse :  
From waves late flushed the glow was gone :  
The topsails of the far-off ships  
Alone in lessening radiance shone :  
Against a stranded boat a maid  
Stood leaning gunwale to her breast,  
As though its pain that pressure stayed :  
Her large eyes rested on the west.

II.

'Beyond the sea ! beyond the sea !  
The weeks, the months, the years go by !  
Ah ! when will some one say of me  
"Beyond the sky ! beyond the sky !"  
And yet I would not have thee here  
To look upon thy country's shame :  
For me the tear : for me the bier :  
For thee fair field, and honest fame.

---

*THE FRIENDLY BLIGHT.*

## I.

A MARCH-WIND sang in a frosty wood  
'Twas in Oriel's land on a mountain brown  
While the woodman stared at the hard black bud,  
And the sun through mist went down :  
'Not always,' it sang, 'shall triumph the wrong  
For God is stronger than man, they say :'  
Let no man tell of the March-wind's song,  
Till comes the appointed day.

## II.

'Sheaf after sheaf upon Moira's plain,  
And snow upon snow on the hills of Mourne !  
Full many a harvest-moon must wane  
Full many a Spring return !  
The Right shall triumph at last o'er wrong :  
Yet none knows how, and none the day :'  
The March-wind sang ; and 'bit 'mid the song  
The little black bud away !

## III.

'Blow south-wind on through my vineyard blow !'  
So pray'd that land of the palm and vine ;  
O Eire, 'tis the north wind and wintry snow  
That strengthen thine oak and pine !  
The storm breaks oft upon Uladh's hills ;  
Oft bursts the wave on the stones by Saul ;  
In God's time cometh the thing God wills  
For God is the Lord of all !

*THE NEW RACE.*

## I.

O YE who have vanquish'd the Land and retain it,  
How little ye know what ye miss of delight !  
There are worlds in her heart, could ye seek it or  
gain it,  
That would clothe a true Noble with glory and  
might.  
What is she, this Isle which ye trample and ravage,  
Which ye plough with oppression and reap with  
the sword,  
But a harp, never strung, in the hall of a savage  
Or a fair wife embraced by a husband abhorr'd ?

## II.

The chiefs of the Gael were the People embodied ;  
The chiefs were the blossom, the People the root !  
Their conquerors the Normans, high-soul'd, and high-  
blooded,  
Grew Irish at last from the scalp to the foot.  
But ye ! ye are hirelings and satraps not Nobles !  
Your slaves, they detest you ; your masters, they  
scorn !  
The river lives on ; but its sun-painted bubbles  
Pass quick, to the rapids insensibly borne.

---

*THE IRISH EXILE AT FIESOLE.*

## I.

HERE to thine exile rest is sweet :

Here, Mother-land, thy breath is near him !  
Thy pontiff, Donat, raised his seat  
On these fair hills that still revere him ;  
Like him that thrill'd the Helvetian vale,  
St. Gall's, with rock-resounded anthem :  
For their sakes honour'd is the Gael :  
The peace they gave to men God grant them !

## II.

Far down in pomp the Arno winds  
By domes the boast of old Religion ;  
The eternal azure shining blinds  
Serene Ausonia's queenliest region.  
Assunta be her name ! for bright  
She sits, assumed 'mid heavenly glories ;  
But ah ! more dear, though dark like night,  
To me, my loved and lost Dolores !

## III.

The mild Franciscans say—and sigh—  
'Weep not except for Christ's dear Passion !'  
They never saw their Florence lie,  
Like her I mourn, in desolation !  
On this high crest they brood in rest,  
The pines their Saint and them embowering,  
While centuries blossom round their nest  
Like those slow aloes seldom flowering.

## IV.

‘Salvete, flores Martyrum?’

Such was the Roman Philip’s greeting  
In banner’d streets with myrtles dumb

The grave-eyed English college meeting :  
There lived an older martyr-land !

All realms revered her ; none would aid her ;  
Or reaching forth a tardy hand  
Enfeebled first, at last betrayed her !

## V.

Men named that land a ‘younger Rome!’

She lit the north with radiance golden ;  
Alone survives the Catacomb

Of all that Roman greatness olden !  
Her Cathall at Taranto sate :

Virgilius ! Saltzburgh was thy mission !  
Who sow’d the Faith fast long, feast late ;  
Who reap’d retain unvex’d fruition.

## VI.

Peace settles on the whitening hair ;

The heart that burned grows cold and colder ;  
My Resurrection spot is there

Where those Etrurian ruins moulder.  
Foot-sore, by yonder pillar’s base

My rest I make, unknown and lowly :  
And teach the legend-loving race  
To weep a Troy than theirs more holy.

---



*WINTER SONG.*

THE high-piled cloud drifts on as in scorn  
Like a ghost, half pining, half stately,  
Or a white ice-island in silence borne  
O'er seas congeal'd but lately.

With nose to the ground like a wilder'd hound  
O'er wood-leaves yellow and sodden  
On races the wind but cannot find  
One sweet track where Spring hath trodden.

The moor is black ; with frosty rime  
The wither'd brier is beaded ;  
The sluggard Spring hath o'erslept her time,  
The Spring that was never more needed.

What says the oak-leaf in the night-cold noon,  
And the beech-stock scoffing and surly ?  
' Who comes too soon is a witless loon  
Like the clown that is up too early.'

But the moss grows fair when the trees are bare,  
The dumb year finds a pillow there ;  
And beside it the fern with its green crown saith  
' Best bloometh the Hope that is rooted in death.'

---

*GAIETY IN PENAL DAYS.*

BEATI IMMACULATI.

' THE storm has roar'd by ; and the flowers reappear  
Like a babe on the battle-field born, the new year  
Through wrecks of the forest looks up on the skies  
With a smile like the windflower's, and violet eyes.

‘There’s warmth in the sunshine ; there’s song in  
the wood :

There’s faith in the spirit, and life in the blood ;  
We’ll dance though the Stranger inherits the soil :  
We’ll sow though we reap not ! For God be the  
toil !

‘O Earth that renewest thy beautiful youth !  
“The meek shall possess thee !” Unchangeable Truth !  
A childhood thou giv’st us ’mid grey hairs reborn  
As the gates we approach of perpetual morn !’

In the halls of their fathers an alien held feast ;  
Their church was a cave and an outlaw their priest ;  
The birds have their nests and the foxes have holes—  
What had these ? Like a sunrise God shone in their  
souls !

## *DIRGE.*

### I.

YE trumpets of long-buried hosts  
Peal, peal no longer in mine ears !  
No more afflict me, wailing ghosts  
Of prinedoms quell’d and vanished years !  
Freeze on my face, forbidden tears :  
And thou, O heart whose hopes are dead  
Sleep well, like hearts that sleep in lead  
Embalmed ’mid royal sepulchres.

### II.

The stream that one time rolled in blood  
A stainless crystal winds to-day :

Fresh scions of the branded wood  
    Detain the flying feet of May :  
    The linnet chants 'mid ruins grey ;  
The young lambs bound the graves among :—  
O Mother-land ! he does thee wrong  
    Who with thy playmates scorns to play.

---

UNA.

To the knee she stood 'mid rushes  
    And the broad, dark stream swept by her :  
Smiles went o'er her, smiles and blushes  
    As the stranger's bark drew nigh her ;  
Near to Clonmacnoise she stood :  
Shannon past her wound in flood.

By her side a wolf-hound wrestled  
    With a bright boy bold as Mars ;  
On her breast an infant nestled  
    Like to her, but none of hers ;  
A golden iris graced her hand—  
All her gold was in that wand.

O'er the misty, moorish margin  
    Frown'd a ruin'd tower afar ;  
Some one said, ' This peasant virgin  
    Comes from chieftains great in war !  
Princes once had bow'd before her :  
Now the reeds alone adore her ! '

Refluent dropt, that bark on gliding,  
    The wave it heaved along the bank :

Like worldings still with fortune siding  
The reed-beds with it backward sank.  
Farewell to her ! The rushing river  
Must have its way. Farewell for ever !

---

*DOUBLE-LIVED ;*

OR, RACES CROWNED.

I.

BEFORE the award, in those bright Halls  
That rest upon the rolling spheres,  
Like kingly patriarchs God instals  
Long-suffering Races proved by years ;  
They stand, the counterparts sublime  
Of shapes that walk this world of woe,  
Triumphant there in endless prime  
While militant on earth below.

II.

As earth-mists build the snowy cloud  
So Spirits risen, that conquered Fate,  
Age after age up-borne in crowd,  
That counterpart Assumed create :  
Some form the statue's hand or head :  
Some add the sceptre or the crown :  
Till the great Image, perfected,  
Smiles on its mortal semblance down.

III.

There stand the Nations just in act,  
Or cleansed by suffering, cleansed not changed :

They stand of martyr Souls compact,  
Round heaven's crystalline bastions ranged.  
Among those Gods Elect art thou,  
My Country—loftier hour by hour !  
The earthly Erin bleeds below :  
The heavenly reigns and rules in power.

---

*ADDUXIT IN TENEBRIS.*

THEY wish thee strong : they wish thee great !  
Thy royalty is in thy heart !  
Thy children mourn thy widow'd state  
In funeral groves. Be what thou art !

Across the world's vainglorious waste,  
As o'er Egyptian sands, in thee  
God's hieroglyph, *His* shade is cast,  
A bar of black from Calvary.

Around thee many a land and race  
Have wealth or sway or name in story ;  
But on that brow discrown'd we trace  
The crown expiatory.

---

*DIRGE.*

I.

O WOODS that o'er the waters breathe  
A sigh that grows from morn till night ;  
O WATERS with your voice like death,  
And yet consoling in your might ;

Ye draw, ye drag me with a charm,  
As when a river draws a leaf,  
From silken court and citied swarm  
To your cold homes of peace in grief.

## II.

In boyhood's pride I trod the shore  
While slowly sank a crimson sun  
Revealed at moments, hid once more  
By rolling mountains gold or dun :  
But now I haunt its marge when day  
Hath laid his fulgent sceptre by,  
And tremble over waters grey  
Long windows of a hueless sky.

---

*IRISH AIRS*

## I.

ON darksome hills thy songs I hear :—  
Nor growths they seem of minstrel art  
Nor wanderers from Urania's sphere,  
But voices from thine own deep heart !  
They seem thine own sad oracles  
Not uttered by thy sons but thee,  
Like waters forced through stony cells  
Or winds from cave and hollow tree.

## II.

From thee what forced them ? Futile quest !  
What draws to widowed eyes the tears ?  
The milk to Rachel's childless breast ?  
The blood to wounds unstaunched of years ?

Long cling the storm-drops—cling yet shake—  
On cypress-spire and cedar's fan :  
Long rust upon the guilty brake  
The heart-drops of the murdered man.

---

*HOPE IN DEATH.*

## I.

DESCEND, O Sun, o'er yonder waste,  
O'er moors and meads and meadows :  
Make gold a world but late o'ercast ;  
With purple tinge the shadows !  
Thou goest to bless some happier clime  
Than ours ; but sinking slowly  
To us thou leav'st a hope sublime  
Disguised in melancholy.

## II.

A Love there is that shall restore  
What Death and Fate take from us ;  
A secret Love whose gift is more  
Than Faith's authentic promise,  
A Love that says, 'I hide awhile  
For sense, that blinds, is round you :'  
O well-loved dead ! ere now the smile  
Of that great Love has found you !

---

*THE DECREE.*

## I.

HATE not the Oppressor ! He fulfils  
Thy destiny decreed—no more :  
What cometh, that the Eternal wills :  
Be ours to suffer and adore.  
O Thou the All-Holy, Thou the All-Just !  
Thou fling'st Thy plague upon the blast :  
We hide our foreheads 'mid the dust  
In penance till the wrath be past.

## II.

The nations sink, the nations rise  
On the dread fount of endless Being,  
Bubbles that burst beneath the eyes  
Of Him the all-shaping and all-seeing.  
'Thou breath'st, and they are made ! Behold,  
Thy breath withdrawn they melt, they cease :  
Our fathers were Thy Saints of old,  
O grant at last their country peace !

---

*SAINT BRIGID OF THE LEGENDS.*

## A BARD SONG.

A soft child-saint she lit the shade  
With brightness more than human :  
Her little hand was soft, they said,  
As any breast of woman.



Through ways bemired to haunts of woe  
She sped, nor hindrance heeded :  
Yet still her foot retained its snow ;  
No stream her white robe needed.

It chanced one eve she moved, foot-bare,  
Among the kine sweet-breathing,  
With boughs the insect tribe to scare  
Their hornèd foreheads wreathing.

Slowly on her their dark eyes grave  
They rolled in sleepy pleasure  
Like things by music charmed, and gave  
Their milk in twofold measure.

That hour there passed a beggar clan  
Through sultry fields on faring :  
'Come drink,' she cried, 'from pail and pan !'  
That small hand was unsparing.

In wrath her Mother near them drew :  
Those pails that late held nothing,  
Like fountains tapped foamed up anew  
And buzzed with milk-floods frothing !

O Saint, the favourite of the poor,  
The afflicted, weak, and weary !  
Like Mary's was that face she bore :  
Men called her 'Erin's Mary.'

In triple vision God to her  
Revealed her country's story :  
She saw the cloud its greatness blur  
She saw, beyond, its glory !

Kildare of Oaks ! thy quenchless Faith,  
Her gift it was : she taught it !  
The shroud Saint Patrick wore in death,  
'Twas she, 'twas she that wrought it !

Thus sang they on the sunburnt land  
Among the stacks of barley ;  
And singing, smiled, by breezes fanned  
From Erin's dream-land early.

---

*SAINT COLUMBA'S STORK.*

A MINSTREL SONG.

COLUMBA dashed into the war :  
Heart-stricken then for penance prayed :  
' See thou thy native land no more : '—  
The Hermit spake : the Saint obeyed.

He sailed : he reached an island green ;  
Alone he clomb its grassy steep :  
Though dimly, Eire could still be seen :  
Once more he launched into the deep.

Iona's soil at last he trod ;  
There, there once more, they say he mixed  
His hymns of Eire with hymns of God  
Standing with wide eyes southward fixed.

Three years went by. One stormy morn  
He grasped a Monk that near him stood :  
' Go down to yonder beach forlorn  
O'er which the northward sea-mists scud.

‘ There, bleeding thou shalt find ere long  
A Stork from Eire that loves her well  
Sore wounded by the tempest’s wrong :  
Uplift and bear her to thy cell.

‘ Three days that Stork shall be thy guest :  
The fourth o’er yonder raging main  
The exile, strong through food and rest,  
Will seek her native Eire again.’

The Monk obeyed. The Stork he found,  
And fed, three days. Those three days o’er  
The exile, soaring, gazed around,  
Then winged her to her native shore.

The Harper ended. Loud and shrill  
They raised their shout and praised that Stork,  
And praised the Saint that, exiled, still  
Could sing for Eire ; for God could work.

---

### *THE GRAVES.*

IN the Cambrian valleys with sea-murmurs haunted  
The grave-yards at noontide are fresh with dawn-  
dew ;

On the virginal bosom white lilies are planted  
’Mid the monotone whisper of pine-tree and yew.

In the dells of Etruria, where all day long warbles  
The night-bird, the faithful ’mid cloisters repose :  
And the long cypress shadow falls black upon  
marbles  
That cool aching hearts like the Apennines’  
snows.

In Ireland, in Ireland the wind ever sighing  
Sings alone the death-dirge o'er the just and the  
good ;  
In the abbeys of Ireland the bones are round lying  
Like blocks where the hewer stands hewing the  
wood.

---

*THE LONG DYING.*

THE dying tree no pang sustains ;  
But, by degrees relinquishing  
Companionship of beams and rains,  
Forgets the balmy breath of Spring :

From off the enringèd trunk that keeps  
His annual count of ages gone  
Th' embrace of Summer slowly slips :  
Still stands the giant in the sun :

His myriad lips, that suck'd of old  
The dewy breasts of heaven, are dry ;  
His root remit the crag, the mould ;  
Yet painless is his latest sigh :

He falls ; the forests round him roar ;—  
Ere long on quiet bank and copse  
Untrembling moonbeams rest ; once more  
The startled babe his head down-drops :

But ah for one who never drew  
From age to age a painless breath !  
And ah the old wrong ever new !  
And ah the many-centuried death

*A BARD'S LOVE FOR ERIN.*

## I.

I THOUGHT it was thy voice I heard ;—  
Ah no ! the ripple burst and died ;  
Among cold reeds the night-wind stirr'd ;  
The yew-tree sigh'd ; the earliest bird  
Answer'd the white dawn far descried.

## II.

I thought it was a tress of thine  
That grazed my cheek and touched my brow ;—  
Ah no ! in sad but calm decline  
'Twas but my ever grapeless vine  
Slow-waving from the blighted bough.

## III.

O Eire, it is not ended ! Soon,  
Or late, thy flower renews its bud !  
In sunless quarries still unhewn  
Thy statue waits ; thy sunken moon  
Shall light once more the autumnal flood !

## IV.

Memory for me her hands but warms  
O'er ashes of thy greatness gone ;  
Or lifts to heaven phantasmal arms,  
Muttering of talismans and charms,  
And grappling after glories flown.

## V.

Tired brain, poor worn-out palimpsest !  
Sleep, sleep ! man's troubles soon are o'er :—

When in dark crypts my relics rest  
 Star-high shall flash my Country's crest,  
 Where birds of darkness cannot soar !

---

*UNREVEALED.*

GREY Harper, rest !—O maid, the Fates  
 On those sad lips have press'd their seal !  
 Thy song's sweet rage but indicates  
 That mystery it can ne'er reveal.

Take comfort ! Vales and lakes and skies,  
 Blue seas, and sunset-girded shore,  
 Love-beaming brows, love-lighted eyes,  
 Contend like thee. What can they more ?

---

*SHANID'S KEEP.*

I.

A CONQUEROR stood upon Shanid's brow  
 And, 'Build me aloft,' he cried,  
 'A castle to rule o'er the meads below  
 From the hills to the ocean's side !'  
 In green Ardineer, far down, alone  
 A beggar girl sang her song,  
 A sorrowful dirge for a roof o'erthrown  
 And a fire stamped out by wrong.

II.

The beggar girl's song in the wind was drowned :  
 A moment it lived : no more :

The Conqueror's castle went back to the ground,  
Went back after centuries four :  
The great halls crumbled from roof to moat ;  
The grey Keep alone remains :  
But echoes still of the girl's song float  
All over the lonely plains.

---

*SAINT BRIGID OF THE CONVENTS.*

SHE looked not on the face of man :  
Nor husband hers, nor brother :  
But where she passed the children ran  
And hailed that Maid their Mother !

In haste she fled soft mead and grove  
For Virtue's region hilly :  
They called her, 'mid the birds, the Dove,  
Among the flowers, the Lily.

In woods of Oriel—Leix's vales—  
Her convent homes she planted  
Where Erin's cloistered nightingales  
Their nocturns darkling chanted.

By many a Scottish moorland wide,  
By many an English river,  
Men loved of old their ' good Saint Bride ;'  
But Erin loves for ever !

A sword went forth ; thy fanes they burn'd !  
Sweet Saint, no anger fret thee !  
There are that ne'er thy grace have spurned :  
There are that ne'er forget thee !

Thus sang they while the autumnal glade  
Exchanged green leaf for golden ;  
And later griefs were lighter made  
By thought of glories olden.

---

*IN FAR LANDS.*

I SEE, I see the domes ascend  
O Seville, o'er thy Guadalquiver :  
I see thy breeze-touched cypress bend ;  
I hear thy moonlit palm-grove shiver :  
  
I know that honour here to those  
Who suffered for the Faith is given ;  
I know, I know that earthly woes  
Are secret blessings crowned in heaven :  
  
But ah ! against Dunluce's crags  
To watch our green sea-billows swelling !  
And ah ! once more to hear the stags  
In Coona's stormy oakwoods belling !

---

*SAINT COLUMBA'S FAREWELL.*

A MINSTREL SONG.

THE exiles gazed on headlands theirs no more,  
Lough Swilly's mountain portals dimly seen :  
Sing us that song Columba sang of yore  
Then sang the Minstrel, 'mid the sad, serene.



Farewell to Aran Isle, farewell !

I steer for Hy : \* my heart is sore :  
The breakers burst, the billows swell  
'Twixt Aran Isle and Alba's † shore.

Thus spake the Son of God, ' Depart ! '

O Aran Isle, God's will be done !  
By Angels thronged this hour thou art :  
I sit within my bark alone.

O Modan, well for thee the while !

Fair falls thy lot, and well art thou !  
Thy seat is set in Aran's Isle :  
Northward to Alba turns my prow.

O Aran, Sun of all the West !

My heart is thine ! As sweet to close  
Our dying eyes in thee as rest  
Where Peter and where Paul repose !

O Aran, Sun of all the West !

My heart in thee its grave hath found :  
He walks in regions of the blest  
The man that hears thy church-bells sound !

O Aran blest, O Aran blest !

Accursed the man that loves not thee !  
The dead man cradled in thy breast—  
No demon scares him : well is he !

Each Sunday Gabriel from on high

For so did Christ our Lord ordain  
Thy Masses come to sanctify  
With fifty angels in his train.

\* Iona.

† Scotland.

Each Monday Michael issues forth  
To touch with blood each sacred fane :  
Each Tuesday cometh Raphael  
To bless the hearth and bless the grain

Each Wednesday cometh Uriel,  
Each Thursday Sariel, fresh from God ;  
Each Friday cometh Ramael  
To bless thy stones and bless thy sod.

Each Saturday comes Mary,  
Comes Babe in arm, 'mid heavenly hosts !  
O Aran, near to heaven is he  
That hears God's angels bless thy coasts !

The Minstrel sang, and ceased ; while women's tears  
Shone, sunset-brightened, on pure cheeks and pale ;  
And dreadful less became in children's ears  
The hoarse sea-dirges, and the rising gale.

---

### *ARBOR NOBILIS.*

#### I.

LIKE a cedar our greatness arose from the earth ;  
Or a plane by some broad-flowing river ;  
Like arms that give blessing its boughs it put forth :  
We thought it would bless us for ever.  
The birds of the air in its branches found rest ;  
The old lions couched in its shadow ;  
Like a cloud o'er the sea was its pendulous crest ;  
It murmur'd for leagues o'er the meadow.

## II.

Was a worm at its root? Was it lightning that  
charr'd

What age after age had created?

Not so! 'Twas the merchant its glory that marr'd  
And the malice that, fearing it, hated.

Its branches lie splintered; the hollow trunk groans  
Like a church that survives desolations;

But the leaves, scatter'd far when the hurricane  
moans,

For the healing are sent to the nations!

---

*ST. COLUMBA OF THE LEGENDS.*

A WEEK ere yet her Saint was born

Columba's mother prayed alone—

Thus sang the Bard on Ascension Morn—

Then the Angel of Eire before her shone.

He lifted a Veil snow-white, yet red

With Roses wrought around and around:

And 'These are the Wounds of Love,' he said.

'That heal the wounded, and wound hearts sound.

He dropped that Veil on her head; and lo!

A wind from God outstretched it wide;

And a golden glory suffused its snow;

And the heart of its Roses grew deeper dyed.

Like a cloud of dawn on the breeze it flew;

Yet it clung to her holy head the while;

It spanned the woods, and the headlands blue;

It circled and girdled with joy the Isle!

And this was a sign that, come what might,  
In gloom or glory, in good or ill,  
Columba's Gospel with love and light  
Should clasp and comfort his Erin still :

A sign, and a pledge, and a holy troth  
That hath not failed her, and never can ;  
For God to Columba sware an oath  
That Eire should be dear to the God made Man ;

More dear as the centuries onward rolled,  
When her bread should be shame, and grief her  
wine ;  
And mantled more closely with fold on fold  
Of healing radiance and strength divine.

Thus sang to the vanquished the Bard Maelmire,  
As the tide swelled up on the grassy shore  
And the smooth sea filled with the sunset's fire :  
He sang ; and the weepers wept no more.

---

### *THE HERMIT'S COUNSEL.*

#### I.

Thus spake the hermit : Count it gain,  
The scoff, the stab, the freezing fear :  
Expiate on earth thine earthly stain ;  
The fire that cleanseth, find it here !  
Nearest we stand to heavenly light  
When girt by Purgatorial glooms :  
That Church which crowns the Roman height  
Three centuries trod the Catacombs !

## II.

But when thy God His Hand withdraws,  
And all things round seem glad and fair,  
Unchallenged Faith, impartial laws,  
And wealth and honour, then beware !  
Beware lest sin in splendour deck'd  
Make null the years of holy sighs,  
And God's great People, grief-elect,  
Her birthright scorning, miss the prize.

---

*EVENING MELODY.*

FRESH eve, that hang'st in yon blue sky  
On breeze-like pinions swaying,  
And leav'st our earth reluctantly  
Departing, yet delaying !  
  
Along the beach the ripples rake ;  
Dew-drench'd the thicket flushes :  
And last year's leaves in bower and brake  
Are dying 'mid their blushes.  
  
Is this the world we knew of yore,  
Long bound in wintry whiteness  
Which here consummates more and more  
Its talismanic brightness ?  
  
To music wedded well-known lines  
Let forth a hidden glory :  
Thus, bathed in sunset, swells and shines  
Lake, woodland, promontory.

New Edens pure from Adam's crime  
Invite the just to enter ;  
The spheres of wrongfull Life and Time  
Grow lustrous to their centre.

Rejoice, glad planet ! Sin and Woe,  
The void, the incompleteness,  
Shall cease at last ; and thou shalt know  
The mystery of thy greatness !

---

*CARO REQUIESCET.*

Look forth, O Sun, with beam oblique  
O'er crags and lowlands mellow ;  
The dusky beech-grove fire, and strike  
The sea-green larch-wood yellow :

All round the deep, new-flooded meads  
Send thy broad glories straying ;  
Each herd that feeds 'mid flowers and weeds  
In golden spoils arraying :

Flash from the river to the bridge  
Red glance with glance pursuing ;  
Fleet from low sedge to mountain ridge,  
Whatever thou dost undoing :

Kiss with moist lip those vapoury bands  
That swathe yon slopes of tillage ;  
Clasp with a hundred sudden hands  
The gables of yon village :

But O, thus sharpening to a point  
O, brightening thus while dying,  
Ere yet thou diest the graves anoint  
Where my beloved are lying !

Ye shades that mount the moorland dells  
Ascend, the tree tops dimming ;  
But leave those amethystine hills  
Awhile in glory swimming !

---

*THE SECRET OF POWER.*

DARK, dark that grove at the Attic gate  
By the sad Eumenides haunted  
Where the Theban King in his blindness sat  
While the nightingales round him chanted !

In a grove as dark of cypress, and bay  
Upgrown to a forest's stature  
In vision I saw at the close of day  
A Woman of godlike feature.

She stood like a Queen, and her vesture green  
Shone out as a laurel sun-lighted ;  
And she sang a wild song like a Mourner's *keen*  
With an Angel's triumph united.

She sang like one whose grief is done ;  
Who has solved Life's dread enigma ;  
A beam from the sun on her brow was thrown  
And I saw there the conquering Stigma.

---

*EVENING MELODY.*

O THAT the pines which crown yon steep  
Their fires might ne'er surrender !  
O that yon fervid knoll might keep  
While lasts the world, its splendour !

Pale poplars on the breeze that lean  
And in the sunset shiver  
O that your golden stems might screen  
For aye yon glassy river !

That yon white bird on homeward wing  
Soft-sliding without motion  
And now in blue air vanishing  
Like snow-flake lost in ocean

Beyond our sight might never flee,  
Yet forward still be flying,  
And all the dying day might be  
Immortal in its dying !

Pellucid thus in saintly trance  
Thus mute in expectation  
What waits the Earth? Deliverance?  
Ah no ! Transfiguration !

She dreams of that 'New Earth' divine  
Conceived of seed immortal ;  
She sings 'Not mine the holier shrine,  
Yet mine the steps and portal !'

---



*THE 'OLD LAND.'*

## I.

AH, kindly and sweet, we must love thee perforce !

The disloyal, the coward alone would not love thee :

Ah, Mother of heroes ! strong Mother ! soft nurse !

We are thine while the large cloud swims onward  
above thee !

By thy hills ever-blue that draw Heaven so near ;

By thy cliffs, by thy lakes, by thine ocean-lull'd  
highlands ;

And more—by thy records disastrous and dear,

The shrines on thy headlands, the cells in thine  
islands !

## II.

Ah, well sings the thrush by Lixnaw and Traigh-li !

Ah, well breaks the wave upon Umbhall and  
Brandon !

Thy breeze o'er the upland blows clement and free

And o'er fields, once his own, which the hind must  
abandon.

A caitiff the noble who draws from thy plains

His all, yet reveres not the source of his greatness ;

A clown and a serf 'mid his boundless domains

His spirit consumes in the prison of its straitness.

## III.

Through the cloud of its pathos thy face is more fair :

In old time thou wert sun-clad ; the gold robe thou  
worest !

To thee the heart turns as the deer to her lair

Ere she dies—her first bed in the gloom of the  
forest.

Our glory, our sorrow, our Mother ! Thy God  
In thy worst dereliction forsook but to prove thee !  
Blind, blind as the blindworm ; cold, cold as the clod  
Who seeing thee see not, possess but not love thee !

---

*TO ETHNEA READING HOMER.*

Alh, happy he who shaped the words  
Which bind thee in their magic net ;  
Who draws from those old Grecian chords  
The harmonies that charm thee yet !

Who waves from that illumined brow  
The dark locks back ;—upon that cheek  
Pallid erewhile as Pindan snow  
Makes thus the Pindan morning break !

'Tis he that fringes lids depress'd  
With lashes heavier for a tear  
And shakes that inexperienced breast  
With womanhood. Upon the bier

Lies cold in death the hope of Troy ;  
Thou hear'st the Elders sob around,  
The widow'd wife, the orphan'd boy,  
The old grey King, the realm discrown'd.

Hadst thou but lived that hour by thee  
Well wept had been the heroic dead ;  
The heroic hands well kissed ; thy knee  
Had propp'd the pallid princely head !

From thee Andromache had caught  
Dirges more sweet ; and she who burn'd  
With self-accusing grief shame-fraught  
A holier woe from thee had learn'd !

Ah child ! Thy Troy in ruin lies  
Like theirs ! Her princes too are cold :  
Again Cassandra prophesies  
Vainly prophetic as of old.

Brandon to Ida's cloudy verge  
Responds. Tirawley's kingless shore  
Wails like the Lycian when its marge  
Saintly Sarpedon trod no more.

Not Gods benign, like Sleep and Death  
Who bore that shepherd-monarch home  
But famine's tooth and fever's breath  
Our exiles hunt o'er ocean's foam.

Peace reigns in heaven. The Fates each hour  
Roll round earth's wheel through darkness vast :  
Alone survives the Poet's power,  
A manlike Art that from the past

Draws forth that line whose sanguine track  
The wicked fear, the weak desert ;  
That clue which leads through centuries back  
The patriot to his Country's heart.

*GRATTAN.*

## I.

God works through man, not hills or snows !

In man, not men, is the godlike power ;  
The man, God's potentate, God foreknows ;

He sends him strength at the destined hour :  
His Spirit He breathes into one deep heart :  
His cloud He bids from one mind depart :  
A Saint !—and a race is to God re-born !  
A Man ! One man makes a Nation's morn !

## II.

A man, and the blind land by slow degrees  
Gains sight ! A man, and the deaf land hears !  
A man, and the dumb land like wakening seas  
Thunders low dirges in proud, dull ears !  
A man, and the People, a three days' corse,  
Stands up, and the grave-bands fall off perforce ;  
One man, and the nation in height a span  
To the measure ascends of the perfect man.

## III.

Thus wept unto God the land of Eire :

Yet there rose no man and her hope was dead :  
In the ashes she sat of a burn'd-out fire ;

And sackcloth was over her queenly head.  
But a man in her latter days arose ;  
A Deliverer stepp'd from the camp of her foes :  
He spake ; the great and the proud gave way,  
And the dawn began which shall end in day !

*THE SECRET JOY.*

O, BLITHESOME at times is life perforce  
When Death is the gate of Hope not Fear ;  
Rich streams lie dumb ; over rough stones course  
The runlets that charm the ear.

‘ Her heart is hard ; she can laugh,’ men say ;  
‘ That light one can jest who has cause to sigh !’  
Her conscience is light ; and with God are they  
She loves : they are safe—and nigh.

God’s light shines brightest on cheeks grief-pale !  
The song of the darkling is sad and dark :  
That proud one boasts of her nightingale !  
O Eire, keep thou thy lark !

---

*INSIGHT.*

SHARP stretch the shades o’er the sward close-bitten  
Which the affluent meadows receive but half ;  
Truth lies clear-edged on the soul grief-smitten  
Congeal’d there in epitaph.

A vision is thine by the haughty lost ;  
An Insight reserved for the sad and pure :  
On the mountain cold in the grey hoar frost  
Thy Shepherd’s track lies sure !

---

*SONG.*

THE Little Black Rose \* shall be red at last !

What made it black but the East wind dry  
And the tear of the widow that fell on it fast ?  
It shall redden the hills when June is nigh !

The Silk of the Kine \* shall rest at last !

What drave her forth but the dragon-fly ?  
In the golden vale she shall feed full fast  
With her mild gold horn, and her slow dark eye.

The wounded wood-dove lies dead at last :

The pine long-bleeding, it shall not die !  
—'This song is secret. Mine ear it pass'd  
In a wind o'er the stone-plain of Athenry.

---

*THE CLUE.*

To one in dungeons bound there came,  
The last long night before he died,  
An Angel garlanded with flame  
Who raised his hand and prophesied :

'Thy life hath been a dream : but lo !  
This night thine eyes shall see the truth :  
That which thou thoughtest weal was woe ;  
And that was joy thou thoughtest ruth.

'Thy Land hath conquer'd through her loss ;  
With her God's chief of Creatures plain'd,

\* Mystical names applied to Ireland by her Bards.

The same who scaled of old the Cross  
 When Mary's self beneath remain'd.\*

'Thou fought'st upon the righteous side :  
 Yet, being dust, thou wroughtest sin :  
 Once—twice—thy hand was raised in pride :  
 The Promised Land thou may'st not win ;

'But they, thy children, shall.' Next morn  
 Around the Patriot-martyr press'd  
 A throng that cursed him. He in turn,  
 The sentenced, bless'd them—and was bless'd.

*ODE ON THE FIRST REPEAL OF THE  
 PENAL LAWS.*

A.D. 1778.

I.

THE hour has struck ! at last in heaven  
 The golden shield an Angel smites !  
 On Erin's altars thunder-riven  
 A happier Destiny alights.  
 'Tis done that cannot be undone  
 The lordlier ages have begun ;  
 The flood that widens as it flows  
 Is loosed ; fulfilled the Triple Woes !

II.

Once more the Faith uplifts her forehead  
 Star-circled to the starry skies :

\* Dante's description of Holy Poverty.

Fangless at last, a snake abhorred,  
 Beneath her foot Oppression lies :  
 Above the waning moon of Time  
 The Apparition stands sublime  
 From hands immaculate, hands of light  
 Down scattering gifts of saintly might.

## III.

Long for her martyrs Erin waited :  
 They came at last. Rejoice this hour  
 Ye tonsured heads, or consecrated  
 That sank beneath the stony shower !  
 Thou Land for centuries dark and dumb  
 Arise and shine ! thy light is come !  
 Return ; for they are dead their knife  
 Who raised, and sought the young child's life.

## IV.

Again the wells of ancient knowledge  
 Shall cheer the thirsty lip and dry :  
 Again waste places, fane and college,  
 The radiance wear of days gone by !  
 Once more shall rise the Minster porch ;  
 Once more shall laugh the village church  
 O'er plains that yield the autumnal feast  
 Once more to industry released !

## V.

Once more the far sea-tide returneth  
 And feeds the rivers of the Land :  
 Once more her heart maternal yearneth  
 With hopes the growth of memories grand.  
 Immortal longings swell her breast  
 Quickened from dust of Saints at rest :



Once more six centuries bud and flower  
To share the triumph of this hour !

## VI.

Who was it called thee the Forsaken ?  
A consort judged ? a Wife put by ?  
He at whose nod the heavens are shaken  
’Tis He Who hails thee from on high.  
‘ I loved thee from of old : I saved :  
Upon My palms thy name is graved :  
With blood were sealed the bridal vows ;  
For lo, thy Maker is thy Spouse ! ’

## VII.

Who, who are those like clouds of morning  
That sail to thee o’er seas of gold ?  
That fly, like doves, their exile scorning,  
To windows known and loved of old ?  
To thee the Isles their hands shall raise ;  
Thy sons have taught them songs of praise ;  
And Kings rebuild thy wall, or wait  
Beside thy never-closing gate.

## VIII.

As from the fig-tree, tempest-wasted  
The untimely fruitage falleth crude,  
So dropp’d around thee, blighted, blasted  
Age after age thy sentenced brood.  
To thee this day thine own are given :  
Yet what are these to thine in heaven ?  
They left thee in thy years of pain :  
Thy cause they pleaded—not in vain.

## IX.

Those years are o'er : made soft by distance  
 Old wars like war-songs soon will seem,  
 The aggression dire, the wild resistance  
 Put on the moonlight of a dream.  
 Ah, gentle Foes ! If *wholly* past—  
 That Norman foe was friend at last !  
 Like him, the ill deed redress, recall—  
 In Erin's heart is room for all.

---

THE CAUSE.

## I.

THE Kings are dead that raised their swords  
 In Erin's right of old ;  
 The Bards that dash'd from fearless chords  
 Her name and praise lie cold :  
 But fix'd as fate her altars stand ;  
 Unchanged, like God, her Faith ;  
 Her Church still holds in equal hand  
 The keys of life and death.

## II.

As well call up the sunken reefs  
 Atlantic waves rush o'er  
 As that old time of native chiefs  
 And Gaelic Bards restore !  
 Things heavenly rise : things earthly sink :  
 God works through Nature's laws ;  
 Sad Isle, 'tis He that bids thee link  
 Thine Action with thy Cause !

*MEMORY.*

‘THEY are past, the old days : let the past be forgotten :

Let them die the old wrongs and old woes that were ours

Like the leaves of the winter down-trampled and rotten

That light in the spring-time the forest with flowers.’

So sings the sweet voice ! But the sad voice replieth ;

‘Unstaunch’d is the wound while the insult remains ;

The Tudor’s black banner above us still flieth ;

The Faith of our fathers is spurned in their fanes !

‘Distrust the repentance that clings to its booty !

Give the people their Church and the priesthood its right :

Till then, to remember the past is a duty,

For the past is our Cause, and our Cause is our might.’

---

*ALL-HALLOWS ; OR, THE MONK’S DREAM.*

## A PROPHECY.

## I.

I TROD once more that place of tombs :

Death-rooted elder full in flower

Oppress’d me with its sad perfumes,

Pathetic breath of arch and tower :

The ivy on the cloister wall  
    Waved, gusty with a silver gleam :  
The moon sank low : the billows' fall  
    In moulds of music shaped my dream.

## II.

In sleep a funeral chant I heard  
    A 'De profundis' far below ;  
On the long grass the rain-drops stirr'd  
    As when the distant tempests blow :  
Then slowly, like a heaving sea,  
    The graves were troubled all around ;  
And two by two, and three by three,  
    The monks ascended from the ground.

## III.

From sin absolved, redeem'd from tears  
    There stood they, beautiful and calm,  
The brethren of a thousand years  
    With lifted brows and palm to palm !  
On heaven they gazed in holy trance ;  
    Low stream'd their beards and tresses hoar :  
And each transfigured countenance  
    The Benedictine impress bore.

## IV.

By Angels borne the Holy Rood  
    Encircled thrice the church-yard bound ;  
They paced behind it, paced in blood,  
    With bleeding feet, but foreheads crown'd ;  
And thrice they breathed that hymn benign,  
    Which angels sang when Christ was born ;  
And thrice I wept, ere tower or shrine  
    Had caught the first white beam of morn.

## V.

Down on the earth my brows I laid ;  
In these, His Saints, I worshipp'd God :  
And then return'd that grief which made  
My heart since youth a frozen clod :  
' O ye,' I wept, ' whose woes are past  
Look round on all these prostrate stones !  
To these can Life return at last ?  
Can Spirit lift once more these bones ? '

## VI.

The smile of him the end who knows  
Went, luminous, o'er them as I spake ;  
Their white locks shone like mountain snows  
O'er which the orient mornings break :  
They stood : they pointed to the West :  
And lo ! where darkness late had lain  
Rose many a kingdom's citied crest  
Reflected in a kindling main !

## VII.

' Not only these, the fanes o'erthrown,  
Shall rise,' they said, ' but myriads more ;  
The seed, far hence by tempests blown,  
Still sleeps on yon expectant shore.  
Send forth, sad Isle, thy reaper bands !  
Assert and pass thine old renown :  
Not here alone—in farthest lands  
For thee thy sons shall weave the crown.'

## VIII.

They spake ; and like a cloud down sank  
The just and filial grief of years ;

And I that peace celestial drank  
Which shines but o'er the seas of tears.  
Thy Mission flashed before me plain,  
O thou by many woes anneal'd !  
And I discern'd how axe and chain  
Had thy great destinies sign'd and seal'd !

## IX.

That seed which grows must seem to die :  
In thee, when earthly hope was none,  
The heaven-born hope of days gone by  
By martyrdom matured, lived on ;  
Conceal'd, like limbs of royal mould  
In some Egyptian pyramid,  
Or statued shape 'mid cities old  
Beneath Vesuvian ashes hid.

## X.

For this cause by a power divine  
Each temporal aid was frustrated :  
Tyrone, Tirconnell, Geraldine—  
In vain they fought ; in vain they bled :  
Successive, 'neath th' usurping hand  
Sank ill-starr'd Mary ; erring James :  
Nor Spain nor France might wield the brand  
Which, for her own, Religion claims !

## XI.

Arise, long stricken ! mightier far  
Are they who fight for God and thee  
Than those that head the adverse war !  
Sad prophet ! lift thy face and see !  
Behold, with eyes no longer wrong'd  
By mists the sense exterior breeds,

The hills of heaven around thee throng'd  
With fiery chariots and with steeds !

## XII.

The years baptized in blood are thine ;  
The exile's prayer from many a strand ;  
The woes of those this hour who pine  
Poor aliens in their native land ;  
Angels and Saints from heaven down-bent  
Watch thy long conflict without pause ;  
And the most Holy Sacrament  
From all thine altars pleads thy cause !

## XIII.

O great through Suffering, rise at last  
Through kindred Action tenfold great !  
Thy future calls on thee thy past  
Its *soul* survives to consummate !  
Let women weep ; let children moan :  
Rise, men and brethren, to the fight :  
One cause hath Earth, and one alone :  
For it, the cause of God, unite !

## XIV.

Let others trust in trade and traffic !  
Be ours, O God, to trust in Thee !  
Cherubic Wisdom, Love Seraphic,  
Beseech that land the Truth makes free.  
The earth-quelling sword let others vaunt ;  
Such toys allure the youth, the boy :  
Be ours for loftier wreaths to pant,  
The Apostles' crown of Faith and Joy !

## XV.

Hope of my country ! House of God !  
 All-Hallows ! Blessed feet are those  
 By which thy courts shall yet be trod  
 Once more as ere the spoiler rose :  
 Blessed the winds that waft them forth  
 To victory o'er the rough sea foam :  
 That race to God which conquers earth  
 Can God forget that race at home ?

---

*HYMN.*

## ECCLESIA DEI.

## I.

Who is She that stands triumphant  
 Rock in strength upon the Rock,  
 Like some city crown'd with turrets  
 Braving storm and earthquake shock ?  
 Who is she her arms extending ;  
 Blessing thus a world restored ;  
 All the anthems of creation  
 Lifting to creation's Lord ?  
 Hers that Kingdom, hers the Sceptre !  
 Fall, ye nations, at her feet !  
 Hers that Truth whose fruit is freedom ;  
 Light her yoke ; her burden sweet.

## II.

As the moon its splendour borrows  
 From a sun unseen all night



So from Christ, the Sun of Justice,  
 Draws His Church her sacred light.  
 Touch'd by His her hands have healing,  
 Bread of Life, absolving Key :  
 Christ Incarnate is her Bridegroom ;  
 The Spirit hers ; His Temple she.  
 Hers the Kingdom, hers the Sceptre !  
 Fall, ye nations, at her feet !  
 Hers that Truth whose fruit is freedom ;  
 Light her yoke ; her burden sweet !

## III.

Empires rise and sink like billows ;  
 Vanish and are seen no more ;  
 Glorious as the star of morning  
 She o'erlooks their wild uproar :  
 Hers the Household all-embracing,  
 Hers the Vine that shadows earth ;  
 Blest thy children, mighty Mother !  
 Safe the stranger at thy hearth.  
 Hers the Kingdom ; hers the Sceptre !  
 Fall, ye nations, at her feet !  
 Hers that Truth whose fruit is freedom ;  
 Light her yoke ; her burden sweet !

## IV.

Like her Bridegroom, heavenly, human,  
 Crown'd and militant in one,  
 Chanting Nature's great Assumption  
 And the Abasement of the Son,  
 Her magnificats, her dirges  
 Harmonise the jarring years ;  
 Hands that fling to heaven the censer  
 Wipe away the orphan's tears.

Hers the Kingdom, hers the Sceptre !  
Fall, ye nations, at her feet !  
Hers that Truth whose fruit is freedom ;  
Light her yoke ; her burden sweet !

---

*ELECTA.*

I.

THE Hour must come. Long since, and now  
The shaft decreed is on the wing :  
Loosed from the Eternal Archer's bow  
The flying fate shall pierce the ring :  
The Hour that comes to seal the right ;  
The Hour that comes to judge the wrong ;  
To lift the vales, and thunder-smite  
Those cliffs the full-gorged eagles throng.

II.

Rejoice, Elect of Isles ! Rejoice  
Pale image of the Church of God !  
Like her afflicted, lift thy voice  
Like her, and hail, and hymn the rod !  
Thou warr'st on earth : at each new groan  
In heaven thy Guardian claps his hands ;  
And glitters o'er the expectant Throne  
A crown inwoven of angel bands !

---

*SONG.*

## I.

WHILE autumn flashed from woods of gold  
Her challenge to the setting sun  
And storm-clouds, breaking, seaward rolled  
O'er brightening waves, their passion done,  
The linnets on a rain-washed beech  
So thronged I saw not branch for bird :  
My skill is scant in forest speech  
But thus they sang or thus I heard.

## II.

'Twas all a dream—the wrong, the strife,  
The scorn, the blow, the loss, the pain !  
Immortal Gladness, Love and Life  
Alone are lords by right and reign :  
The Earth is tossed about as though  
Young Angels tossed a cowslip ball ;  
But, rough or level, high or low,  
What matter ? God is all in all.

---

*THE CHANGE.*

## I.

WAS it Truth ; was it Vision ? The old year was  
dying ;  
Clear rang the last chime from the turret of stone ;  
The mountain hung black o'er the village low-lying ;  
O'er the moon, rushing forward, loose vapours  
were blown ;

When I saw an angelical choir with bow'd faces  
Wafting on, like a bier, upon pinions outspread  
An angel-like Form that of death had no traces :—  
Without pain she had died in her sleep ; but was  
dead.

## II.

Was it Truth ; was it Vision ? The darkness was  
riven ;  
Once more through the infinite breast of pure  
night  
From heaven there looked downward, more beauteous  
than heaven,  
A visage whose sadness was lost in its light :—  
' Why seek'st thou, my son, 'mid the dead for the  
living ?  
Thy Country is risen, and lives on in thy Faith ;  
I died but to live ; and now, Life and Life-giving,  
Where'er the Cross triumphs I conquer in death.'

---

*SEMPER EADEM.*

## I.

THE moon, freshly risen from the bosom of ocean,  
Hangs o'er it suspended, all mournful yet bright ;  
And a yellow sea-circle with yearning emotion  
Swells up as to meet it, and clings to its light :  
The orb unabiding grows whiter, mounts higher ;  
The pathos of darkness descends on the brine :  
O Erin ! the North drew its light from thy pyre :  
Thy light woke the nations ; the embers were  
thine !

## II.

Tis sunrise ! The mountains flash forth ; and, new-  
 reddened,

The billows grow lustrous, so lately forlorn ;  
 From the orient with vapours long darken'd and  
 deaden'd

The trumpets of Godhead are pealing ' the Morn !'  
 He rises, the Sun, in his might re-ascending ;

Like an altar beneath him lies blazing the sea !  
 O Erin ! Who proved thee returns to thee, blending  
 The future and past in one garland for thee !

*EPILOGUE.*

WITH spices and urns they come : ah me, how sorrow  
 can babble !

Nothing abides save Love ; and to Love comes  
 gladness at last ;

Sad was the legend yet sweet ; though its truth was  
 mingled with fable ;

Dire was the conflict and long ; but the rage of  
 the conflict is past.

They are past, the three great Woes ; and the days  
 of the dread Desolation ;

To amethyst changed are the stones blood-stain'd  
 of the temple-floor :

A Spiritual Power she lives who seem'd to die as a  
 Nation ;

Her story is that of a Soul :—and the story of Earth  
 is no more.

Endurance it was that won ; Suffering, than Action  
thrice greater ;

For Suffering humbly *acts*. Away with sigh and  
with tear !

She has gone before you and waits : She has gifts for  
the blinded who hate her ;

And that bright Shape by the death-cave in music  
answers, ' Not here.'

---

“THE IRISH SISTERS.”

Dedicated

TO MY EARLIEST FRIEND AND KINSMAN

STEPHEN E. SPRING RICE.



## *THE SISTERS; OR, WEAL IN WOE.*

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1861.

This Tale, written in happier times, was intended to be the first of a series illustrating the Ireland of the latter day, and especially that side of Irish life and character which is too often ignored, and which remains the hope of Ireland's true friends in her darkest days.—January, 1884.

FROM nine to twelve my guest was eloquent  
In anger, mixed with sorrow, at the things  
He saw around us ; lands half marsh, half weeds,  
Gates from the gate-posts miserably divorced,  
Hovels ill-thatched, wild fences, fissured roads—  
' Your people never for the future plan ;  
They live but for the moment.' Thus he spake,  
A youth just entering on his broad domains,  
A senator in prorogation time  
Travelling for knowledge, Oxford's accurate scholar,  
A perfect rider, clean in all his ways,  
But by traditions narrowed. As the moon  
Turns but one side to earth, so showed that world  
Whereon he gazed, for stubborn was his will  
And Ireland he had never loved. ' You err '  
I answered, taking in good part his wrath,  
' Our peasant too has prescience ; far he sees ;  
Earth is his foreground only rough or smooth ;  
In him from seriousness the lightness comes :  
Too serious is he to make sacrifice  
For fleeting good ; the battles of this world

He with the left hand fights and half in sport ;  
He has his moment—and eternity.’

‘ Ay, ay,’ exclaimed my guest, ‘ your Church, she  
does it !

Your feasts and fasts and wakes and social rites,  
With “ Sir,” and “ Ma’am,” and usages of Court :—

I’ve seen a hundred men leave plough and spade

To hale a three weeks’ infant to its grave,

A cripple pay two shillings for a cart

To bear him to the Holy Well. Sick Land !

Look up ! the proof is round you written large !

Your Faith is in the balance wanting found :

Your shipless seas confess it ; bridgeless streams ;

Your wasted wealth of ore, and moor, and bay !

Beneath the Upas shade of Faith depraved

All things lie dead—wealth, comfort, freedom,  
power ;

All that great Nations boast !’ ‘ Such things,’ I  
answered,

‘ The Gentiles seek ; and you new tests have found ;

“ Ecclesiæ stantis vel cadentis,” friend ;

“ Blessed the rich : blessed whom all men praise : ”

New Scriptures, these ; the Irish keep the old !

Say, are there not diversities of gifts ?

Are there not virtues—Industry is one—

Which reap on earth, whilst others sow for heaven ?

Faith, hope, and love, and purity, and patience,

Humility, and self-forgetfulness,

These too are virtues ; yet they rear not States.

What then ? Of many Nations earth is made :

Each has its function ; each its part for others :

If all were hand, where then were ear or eye ?

If all were foot, where head ? You rail, my friend,

Not at my country only but your own.

The land that gave us birth our service claims,  
 The suffering land our love. Yet England, too,  
 They love, and they the most, who flatter not.  
 A thousand years of nobleness she lived  
 Whereof you rob her ! In this isle are men  
 By ancient lineage hers. Such men might say,  
 " My England was entombed ere yours had birth."  
 Dates she from Arkwright only ? Rose the Nation  
 With Alfred, or those Tudor Kings who built  
 The Golden Gate of England's modern time,  
 But built it upon liberties annulled,  
 Old glories quenched, the old Nobles dead or quelled—  
 Ay, wrecks more sad ? ' His host, I could not use  
 Words rough as his albeit to shield a land  
 For every shaft a targe ; so changed the theme  
 To her he knew—thence loved.

He loved his country ;

An older man than he for things less great  
 Had loved that land. Yet who could gaze, unmoved,  
 From Windsor's terraced heights o'er those broad  
     meads  
 Lit by the pomp of silver-winding Thames  
 Dropping past templed grove, and hall, and farm,  
 Toward the great City ? Who, unthrilled, could  
     mark  
 Her Minsters, towering far away, with heads  
 That stay the sunset of old times ; or these,  
 Oxford and Cambridge, England's anchors twain,  
 That to her moorings hold her ? Fresh from them  
 Who, who could tread, O Wye, thy watery vale  
 Where Tintern reigns in ruin ; who could rest  
 Where Bolton finds in Wharf a warbling choir,  
 Or where the sea-wind fans thy brow discrown'd,  
 Furness, nor love and wonder ? Who untouch'd,

When evening creeps from Scawfell toward Black  
Combe,

Could wander by thy darkly gleaming lakes  
Embayed 'mid sylvan garniture and isles  
From saint or anchoret named, within the embrace  
Of rural mountains green, or sound, scent, touch,  
Of kine-besprinkled, soft, partitioned vales  
Almost domestic ? Shadow-haunted land !  
By Southey's lake Saint Herbert holds his own !  
The knightly armour now by Yew-dale's crag  
Rings loud no longer : Grasmere's reddening glass  
Reflects no more the on-rushing clan : yet still  
Thy Saxon Kings, and ever-virgin Queens  
Possess thee with a quiet pathos ; still,  
Like tarnished path forlorn of moon that sets  
Over wide-watered moor and marsh, thy Past  
A spiritual sceptre though deposed, extends  
From sea to sea—from century-worn St. Bees  
To Cuthbert's tomb under those eastern towers  
On Durham's bowery steep !

He loved his country :  
That love I honoured. Great and strong he called her :  
But well I knew that had her greatness waned,  
His love had waxed.

As thus we talk'd the sun  
Launched through the hurrying clouds a rainy beam  
That smote the hills. My guest exclaimed, ' Come  
forth :

We waste the day ! Yon ridge my fancy takes ;  
Climb we its crest ! ' The wolf-hound at our feet  
Our drift divining, bounded sudden on us  
In rapture of prospective gratitude.

We passed the offending gate ; a plank for bridge

We passed the offending stream which dashed its  
spray

Contemptuous on us, proud of liberty.

I laughed ; ‘ Our passionate Ireland is the stream ;

Seven hundred years at will it mocks or chides ;

You have not made it turn your English mill ? ’

We scaled the hills ; we pushed through miles of  
trees

Which, sire and son, had held their own since first

The tall elk trod their ways. Lightning and storm

Had left large wrecks : election wars, not less,

Or hospitalities as fierce, when home

A thousand chiefless clansmen dragged the bride,

Or danced around a cradle,—ah, brave hearts !

Loyal where cause for loyalty was scant !

Vast were those woods and fair ; rock, oak, and yew,

Grey, green, and black, in varying measures striking

That three-stringed lyre which charms not ear but  
eye.

Long climbing, from the woodland we emerged

And paced a rocky neck of pale green pasture

The limit of two counties. Full in face

Rushed, ocean-scented, the harmonic wind :

Round us the sheep-bells chimed ; a shower late past

With jewelry had hung the blackberry bush,

And gorse-brake half in gold. On either side

Thin-skinned, ascetic, slippery, the descent

Down slanted toward the creeping mists. Our goal

We reached at last—a broad and rocky mass

Forth leaning lordly unto lands remote

The lion’s head of all those feebler hills

That cowering slunk behind it. Far around

Low down, subjected, stretched the sea-like waste

Shade-swept, unbounded, like infinity.

An hour before his time the sun had dropped  
Behind a mountain-wall of barrier cloud  
Wide as the world : but five great beams converged  
Toward the invisible seat of his eclipse ;  
And over many a river, bay, and mere  
Lay the dull red of ante-dated eve.

That summit was a churchyard. Cross-engraven  
Thronged the close tomb-stones. Each one prayed  
for peace ;  
And some were raised by men whose heads were  
white  
Ere selfless toil had won the hoarded coins  
That honoured thus a parent. In the midst  
A tomb-like chapel, thirty feet by ten,  
Stood monumental with stone roof and walls  
The wrestling centuries slid from. Nigh we sat  
While, by the polished angle split, the wind  
Hissed like a forkèd serpent. Silent long  
My friend remain'd ; his sallies all had ceased,  
A man of tender nerve though stubborn thought.  
The scene weighed on him like a Prophet's scroll  
Troubling some unjust City. Far and near  
He scanned the desolate region, and at last  
Prayed me the hieroglyphic to expound.  
' Yon tower which blurs the lonely lake far off,  
What is it ? ' And I answered, ' Know you not ?  
He built it, he that Norman horsed and mailed,  
Who, strong in Henry's might and Adrian's bull,  
Rent from the Gaelic monarch half his realm ;  
The rest came later, dowry of the bride.'

Once more he mused ; then, westward pointing,  
spake :

‘ Yon lovely hills, yet low, with Phidian line  
 That melts into the horizon :—on their curve  
 A ruined castle stands ; the sky glares through it,  
 Red, like a conflagration ? ’ I replied :  
 ‘ Four hundred years the Norman held his own :  
 He spake the people’s language ; they in turn  
 His war-cry had resounded far and wide ;  
 Their history he had grown impersonate,  
 The land rejoiced in him, and of his greatness  
 Uplifted, glorying, on a neck high held  
 The beautiful burden, as the wild stag lifts  
 O’er rocky Torc his antlers ! Would you more ?  
 The Desmond was unloved beside the Thames ;  
 The right of the great Palatine was trampled ;  
 His Faith by law proscribed. O’er tombs defaced,  
 In old Askeaton’s Abbey, of his sires  
 He vowed unwilling war. Long years the realm  
 Reel’d like a drunken man. Behold the end !  
 Yon wreck speaks all ! ’

Thus question after question  
 Dragged, maimed and mangled, dragged reluctant  
 forth  
 Time’s dread confession ! Crime replied to crime :  
 Whom Tudor planted Cromwell rooted out ;  
 For Charles they fought ;—to fight for Kings, their  
 spoilers,  
 The rebel named rebellion ! William next !  
 Once more the Nobles were down hurled ; once more  
 Nobility as in commission placed  
 By God among the lowly. Loyalty  
 To native Princes, or to Norman chiefs  
 Their lawless conquerors, or to British Kings,  
 Or her the Mother Church that ne’er betrayed,

Had met the same reward. The legend spake  
Words few but plain, grim rubric traced in blood ;  
While, like a Fury fleeting through the air,  
History from all the octaves of her lyre  
Struck but one note ! What rifted tower and keep  
Witnessed of tyrannous and relentless wars,  
That shipless gulfs, that bridgeless streams and  
moors,  
Black as if lightning-scarred, or banned of God,  
Proclaimed of laws blacker than brand or blight—  
Those Penal Laws. The tale was none of mine ;  
Stone railed at stone ; grey ruins dumbly frowned  
Defiance, and the ruin-handled blast  
Scattered the fragments of Cassandra's curse  
From the far mountains to the tombs close by  
Which muttered treason.

That sad scene to me  
Had lost by use its pathos as the scent  
That thrills us while we pass the garden palls  
On one within it tarrying. To my friend  
It spake its natural language : and as he  
Who, hard through habit, reads with voice unmoved  
A ballad that once touched him, if perchance  
Some listener weeps, partakes that listener's trouble  
Even so the stranger's sorrow struck on mine,  
And I believed the things which I beheld,  
There sitting silent. When at last he spake  
The spirit of the man in part was changed ;  
The things but heard of he had seen : the truths  
Coldly conceded now he realized :  
Justice at last with terrible recoil  
Leap'd up full-armed, a strong man after sleep,  
And dashed itself against the wrong ! I answered :



‘Once more you speak the words you spake this morn,

“ Look up, the proof is round you written large : ”  
But in an altered sense.’

I spake, and left him :  
Left him to seek a tomb which three long years  
Holds one I honoured. Half an hour went by ;  
Then he rejoined me. With a knitted brow,  
And clear vindictiveness of speech, like him  
Who, loving, hates the sin of whom he loves,  
He spake against the men who, having won  
By right or wrong the mastery of this isle  
(For in our annals he was versed, nor ran  
In custom’s blinkers save on modern roads),  
Could make of it, seven hundred years gone by,  
No more than this ! Then I : ‘ No country loved they :  
Her least, the imperial realm ! ’Tis late to mourn ;  
Let past be past.’ ‘ The Past,’ he said ‘ is present ;  
And o’er the Future stretches far a hand  
Shadowy and minatory.’ ‘ Come what may,’  
I said, ‘ no pang to Ireland can be new ;  
No shadow fail to dew some soul with grace.  
The history of a Soul holds in it more  
Than doth a Nation’s ! In its every chance  
Eternity lies hid ; from every step  
Branch forth two paths piercing infinity.  
These things look noblest from their spiritual side :  
A statesman, on the secular side you see them,  
And doubt a future based on such a past.  
’Tis true, with wrong dies not the effect of wrong,  
Or sense thereof : ’tis true stern Power with time  
Changes its modes, not instinct : true it is  
That hollow peace is war that wears a mask :

Yet let us quell to-day unquiet thoughts :  
She rests who lies in yonder tomb : sore pains  
She suffered : yet within her there was peace :  
In God's high Will she rests ; and why not we ?'

Thus we conversed till twilight, thickening, crept  
Compassionate, o'er a scene to which we said  
Twilight seemed native, day a garish vest  
Worn by a slave. Returning, oft my friend  
Cast loose in wrath the arch-rebel Truth ; I answered :

'She rests ; and why not we ? O suffering land !  
Thee, too, God shields ; and only for this cause  
Can they that love thee sleep.'—

Holy were all as she, the wrongs long past  
Would rack our age no longer : for that cause  
The blinder they who mock her country's Faith.  
Thousands are like her ! Ireland's undergrowths—  
Her hope is there, and not in cloud or sunshine  
That beat her mountain-tops. The maiden's tale  
He sought with instance. 'Twas not marvellous,  
I told him : yet to calm his thoughts perturbed,  
Thus, while the broad moon o'er the lonely moor  
Rose, blanching as she soared, till pools, at first  
With trembling light o'erlaid, gave back her face,  
And all the woodland waves as eve advanced  
Shone bright o'er sombre hollows, I recounted  
The fragments of a noteless Irish life,  
Not strange esteemed among us. Such a theme  
I sought not. Ill it were to forge for friend  
A providence, or snare him though to Truth.  
Yet I was pleased he sought that tale. 'Twas  
sad

But in its dusky glass—and this I hid not—

Shadowed a phantom image of my country,  
Vanquished yet victor, in her Weal and Woe.

---

The father in the prime of manhood died ;  
The mother followed soon ; their children twain,  
Margaret Mac Carthy, and her sister Mary,  
The eldest scarcely ten years old, survived  
To spread cold hands upon a close-sealed grave,  
And cry to those who answered not. The man  
Who, in that narrow spot to them the world,  
Stood up and seemed as God ; that gentler one  
Who overhung like Heaven their earliest thought,  
And in the bosom of whose sleepless love  
Reborn they seemed each morning, both were dead.  
In grief's bewilderment the orphans stood  
Like one by fraud betrayed : nor moon, nor sun,  
Nor trees, nor grass, nor herds, nor hills appeared  
To them what they had been. In saddened eyes,  
Frightened yet dull, in voice subdued, and feet  
That moved as though they feared to wake the dead,  
Men saw that nowhere loneliness more lives  
Than in the breasts of children. Time went by ;  
The farm was lost ; and to her own small home  
Their father's mother led them. 'Twas not far ;  
They still could see the orchard they had loved ;  
Behind the hedge could hear the robin sing,  
And the bees murmur. Slowly, as the trance  
Of grief dissolved, the present lived once more ;  
The past became a dream !

I see them still !

Softly the beauty-making years on went,  
And each one as he passed our planet's verge  
Looked back, and left a gift. A darker shade

Dropped on the deepening hair ; a brighter gleam  
Forth flashed from sea-blue eyes with darkness fringed.  
Like, each to each, their stature growing kept  
Unchanged gradation. To her grandmother  
A quick eye and a serviceable hand  
Endeared the elder most ; she kept the house ;  
Hers was the rosier cheek, the livelier mind,  
The smile of readier cheer. In Mary lived  
A visionary and pathetic grace  
Through all her form diffused, from those small feet  
Up to that beauteous-shaped and netted head,  
Which from the slender shoulders and slight bust  
Rose like a queen's. Alone, not solitary,  
Full often half an autumn day she sat  
On the high grass-banks, foot with foot enclasped,  
Now twisting osiers, watching cloud-shades now,  
Or rushing vapours through whose chasms there  
shone

Far off an alien race of clouds like Alps  
O'er Courmayeur white-gleaming, and like them  
To stillness frozen. Well that orphan knew them,  
Those marvellous clouds that roof our Irish wastes ;  
Spring's lightsome veil outblown, sad Autumn's bier,  
And Winter's pillar of electric light  
Slanted from heaven. A spirit-world, so seemed it,  
In them was imaged forth to her.

With us

The childish heart betroths itself full oft  
In vehement friendship. Mary's was of these ;  
And thus her fancy found that counterweight  
Which kept her feet on earth. With her there  
walked

Two years a little maiden of the place,  
Her comrade, as men called her. Eve by eve

Homeward from school we saw them as they passed,  
One arm of each about the other's neck,  
Above both heads a single cloak. She died,  
To Mary leaving what she valued most,  
A rosary strung with beads from Olivet.  
Daily did Mary count those beads ; from each  
The picture of some Christian Truth ascending,  
Till all the radiant Mysteries shone on high  
Like constellations, and man's gloomy life  
For her to music rolled on poles of love  
Through realms of glory. Hope makes Love im-  
mortal !

That friend she ne'er forgot. In later years  
Working with other maidens equal-aged,  
(A lady of the land instructed them,)  
In circle on the grass, not them she saw,  
Heard not the song they sang : alone she sat,  
And heard 'mid sighing pines and murmuring streams  
The voice of the departed.

Smoothly flowed  
Till Margaret had attained her eighteenth year  
The tenor of their lives ; and they became,  
Those sisters twain, a name in all the vale  
For beauty, kindness, truth, for modest grace,  
And all that makes that fairest flower of all  
Earth bears, heaven fosters—peasant nobleness :—  
For industry the elder. Mary failed  
In this, a dreamer ; indolence her fault,  
And self-indulgence, not that coarser sort  
Which seeks delight, but that which shuns annoy.  
And yet she did her best. The dull red morn  
Shone, beamless, through the wintry hedge while  
passed  
That pair with panniers, or, on whitest brows

The balanced milk-pails. Margaret ruled serene  
A wire-fenced empire smiling through soft glooms,  
The pure, health-breathing dairy. Softer hand  
Than Mary's ne'er let loose the wool ; no eye  
Finer pursued the on-flowing line : her wheel  
Murmured complacent joy like kitten pleased :  
With us such days abide not.

Sudden fell

Famine, the Terror never absent long,  
Upon our land. It shrank—the daily dole ;  
The oatmeal trickled from a tighter grasp ;  
Hunger grew wild through panic ; infant cries  
Maddened at times the gentle into wrong :  
Death's gentleness more oft for death made way ;  
And like a lamb that openeth not its mouth  
The sacrificial People, fillet-bound,  
Stood up to die. Amid inviolate herds  
Not few the sacraments of death received,  
Then waited God's decree. These things are known :  
Strangers have witness'd to them ; strangers writ  
The epitaph again and yet again :  
The nettles and the weeds by the way-side  
Men ate : from sharpening features and sunk eyes  
Hunger glared forth, a wolf more lean each hour ;  
Children seemed pigmies shrivelled to sudden age ;  
And the deserted babe too weak to wail  
But shook if hands, pitying or curious, raised  
The rag across him thrown. In England alms  
From many a private hearth were largely sent,  
As ofttimes they have been. 'Twas vain. The land  
Wept while her sons sank back into her graves  
Like drowners 'mid still seas. Who could escaped :  
And on a ghost-thronged deck, amid such cries  
As from the battle-field ascend at night

When stumbling widows grope o'er heaps of slain,  
Amid such cries stood Mary, when the ship  
Its cable slipped and, on the populous quays  
Grating, without a wind, on the slow tide,  
Dropped downward to the main.

For western shores

Those emigrants were bound. At Liverpool,  
Fann'd by the ocean breeze the smouldering fire  
Of fever burst into a sudden flame ;  
The stricken there were left ; among them Mary.  
How long she knew not in an hospital,  
A Babel of confused distress, she lay,  
Dinned with delirious strife. But o'er her brow  
God shook the dew of dreams wherein she trod  
The shadowed wood-walks of old days once more,  
And dabbled in old streams. Ere long, still weak,  
Abroad she roamed, a basket on her arm,  
With violets heaped. The watchman of the city  
Laid his strong hand upon her drooping head  
Banning the impostor. 'Twas her rags, she thought,  
Incensed him, and in meekness moved she on.  
When one with lubrique smile toyed with her flowers,  
And spake of violet eyes and easier life,  
She understood not, but misliked, and passed.  
In Liverpool an aged priest she found,  
A kinsman of her mother's. Much to her  
Of emigrants he spake, and of their trials,  
Old ties annull'd, and 'mid temptations strange  
Lacking full oft the Bread of Life. She wept ;  
Before the tabernacle's lamp she prayed  
Freshly-absolved and heavenliest, with prayer  
That showered God's blessing o'er the wanderers  
down :  
But dead was her desire to cross the main.

Her strength restored, beyond the city-bound  
With others of her nation she abode,  
Amid the gardens labouring. A rough clan  
Those outcasts seemed : not like their race at home :  
Nor chapel theirs, nor school. Their strength was  
prized ;

Themselves were so esteemed as that sad tribe  
Beside the Babylonian streams that wept,  
By those that loved not Sion.

Weeks grew months ;

And, with the strength to suffer, sorrow came.  
Hard by their nomad camp a youth there lived  
Of wealthier sort, who looked upon this maid :  
Her country was his own : he loved it not :  
Had rooted quickly in the stranger's land ;  
And versatile, cordial, specious, seeming-frank,  
Contracting for himself a separate peace,  
Had prosper'd, but had prospered in such sort  
As they that starve within. Her confidence  
He gained. To love unworthy, still he loved her :  
Loved with the love of an unloving heart,  
That love which either is in shallows lost,  
Or in its black depth breeds the poison weed.  
She knew him not ; how could she ? He himself  
Knew scantily. Near her what was best within him  
Her golden smile sunned forth ; but, dark and cold,  
Like a benighted hemisphere abode  
A moiety of his being which she saw not.  
His was a superficial nature, vain,  
And hard, to good impressions sensitive,  
And most admiring virtues least his own ;  
A mirror that took in a seeming world,  
And yet remained blank surface. He was crafty,  
Followed the plough with diplomatic heart ;



His acts were still like the knight's move at chess,  
 Each a surprise ; not less, to nature's self  
 Who heard him still referr'd them. 'What !' men  
 said,

'Marry the portionless !' Strange are fortune's  
 freaks !

The wedding-day was fixed, the ring brought home,  
 When from a distant uncle tidings came :

His latest son was dead. 'Take thou my farm,  
 And share my house'—So spake the stern old man—  
 'And wed the wife whom I for thee have found.'

He showed the maid that letter. Slowly the weeds  
 Made way adown the thick and stifled stream,  
 And others followed ; slowly sailed the cloud  
 Through the dull sky, and others followed slowly :  
 At last he spake. Low were his words and thin,  
 Many, but scarcely heard. He asked—her counsel !  
 Her cheek one moment burned. Death-cold, once  
 more

A little while she sat ; then rose and said ;  
 'You would be free ; I free you ; go in peace.'  
 'Twas the good angel in his heart that loved her ;  
 'Twas not the man himself ! He wept, but went.  
 The woman of the house that night was sure  
 The girl had loved him not. She thought not so  
 When, four months past, she mark'd her mouth, aside,  
 Tremble, his name but uttered.

Sharp the wrong !

Yet they on Life's bewildered book would force  
 A partial gloss it bears not who assume  
 The injured wholly free from blame. The world  
 Is not a board in squares of black and white,  
 Or else the judgment-executing tongue  
 Would lack probation. Wronged men are not angels ;

Wrong's chiefest sin is this—it genders wrong ;  
So stands the offender in his own esteem  
Exculpate ; while the feebly-judging starve  
The just cause, babbling 'mutual was the offence !'  
The man was weak ; not wholly vile. 'Twas well,  
Doubtless, to free him ; yet in after years,  
When early blight had struck his radiant head,  
'The girl bewailed the pride that left thus tempted  
'The man she loved ; arraigned the wrath that left him  
Almost without farewell. His letter too,  
Unopen'd she returned. 'Twas strange ! so sweet—  
Not less there lived within her, down, far down,  
A fire-spring seldom wakened ! When a child,  
At times, by some strange jealousy disturbed  
From her still dream she flashed in passion quelled  
Ere from her staid sister's large blue eyes  
The astonishment had passed. Such moods remained  
'Though rare—that wrath of tender hearts, which  
scorns  
Revenge, which scarcely utters its complaint,  
And yet forgives but slowly.

In those days

Within the maiden's bosom there arose  
Sea-longings, and desire to sail away  
She knew not whither ; and her arms she spread,  
Weeping, to winds and waves, and shores unknown,  
Lighted by other skies ; and inly thus  
She reasoned self-deceived. 'What keeps thee here ?  
'Twas for a farther bourne thou bad'st farewell  
To those at home, and here thou art as one  
That hangs between two callings.' In her heart  
Tempests low-toned to ocean-tempests yearned,  
And ever when she marked the shipmast forest  
That on the smoky river swayed far off,

Her wish became a craving. Soon once more  
Alone 'mid hundreds on a rain-washed deck  
She stood, and saw the billows heave around  
And all the passions of that headlong world.  
Dark-visaged ocean frowned with hoary brows  
Against dark skies; huge, lumbering water-weights  
Went shouldering through the abysses: streaming  
clouds

Ran on the lower levels of the wind ;  
And in the universe of things she seemed  
An atom random blown. Full many a morn  
Rose red through mists, like babe that weeps to rise ;  
Full many an evening died from wave to wave ;  
Then gradual peace possessed her. Love may wound  
But 'tis self-love exasperates that wound ;  
A noble nature casts out bitterness,  
And o'er the scar, like pine-tree incorrupt,  
Weeps healing gums. Heart-whole she gazed at last,  
On the great city chiefest of that realm  
Which wears the Future's glory. Landed, soon  
Back to old duties with a mightier zest  
Her heart, its weakening sadness passed, returned :  
Kindness made service easier, and the tasks  
At first distasteful smiled on her ere long :  
There she was loved once more ; there all went well  
And there in peace she might have lived and died ;  
Yet in that region she abode not long :  
In part a wayward instinct drave her forth ;  
In part a will that from the accomplished end  
Unstable swerved ; in part a hope forlorn :  
She sought a site their sojourn who had left  
Long since her native village. Thence old names,  
Faces unknown, yet recognized, thronged round her  
In unconsummate union, (hearts still like,

Yet all beside so different,) not like Souls  
Re-met in heaven—more like those Shades antique  
That, 'mid the empurpled fields, of other airs  
Mindful, in silence trod the Elysian land,  
Or flocked around the latest guest of Death  
With question sad of home. Imperfect ties  
Rub severance into soreness. Mary passed,  
Thus urged, ere long to lonelier climes : she tracked  
Companioned sometimes, sometimes without friend,  
The boundless prairie, sailed the sea-like lake,  
Descended the broad river as it rushed  
Through immemorial forests : lastly stood  
Sole, 'mid that city by the southern sea.

There sickness fell upon her : there her hand  
Dropt, heavier daily, on her task half done ;  
Her feet wore chains unseen. The end, she thought,  
Was coming. Ofttimes, in her happier days,  
She wished to die and be with God : yet now,  
Wearied by many griefs, to life she clung,  
Upbraiding things foregone and inly sighing  
' None loves to die.' Sorrow, earth-born, in some  
Breeds first the Earth-infection ; in them works,  
Like those pomegranate seeds that barred from light  
For aye sad Ceres' child ! Alas ! how many,  
The ill-honoured ecstasies of youth surceased,  
Exchange its clear spring for the mire ! Hope sick,  
How oft Faith dies ! How few are they in whom  
Virgin but yields to Vestal ; casual pureness  
Merged in essential ; childhood's matin dew  
Fixed, ere exhaled, in the Soul's adamant !  
Mary with these had part ; to her help came,  
That help the proud despise. One eve it chanced  
Upon the vast and dusking quays she stood  
Alone and weeping. She that morn had sent

Her latest hoardings to her grandmother,  
And half was sorry she had naught retained :  
The warm rain wet her hair : she heard within  
The silver ringing of its drops commingling  
With that still mere beside her childhood's home,  
And with the tawny sedge that girt it round,  
And with its winter dogwood far away  
Reddening the faint, still gleam. As thus she stood  
Upon her shoulder sank a hand. She turned :  
It was a noble lady clothed in black,  
And veiled. That veil thrown back, she recognized  
At once the luminous stillness and the calm  
Ethereal which the sacred cloister breeds.  
A voice as pure and sweet as if from heaven,  
Toned as friend speaks to friend, addressed her  
thus :

‘ You lack a home : our convent is hard by.’

The lady, Spanish half, and Irish half,  
No answer sought, but with compulsion soft  
Drew her, magnetic, as the tree hard by  
Draws the poor creeper on the ground diffused,  
And lifts it into light. The child's cold hand  
Lurked soon in hers : and in that home which seemed  
An isle of heaven she lived a meek lay sister,  
Ere long by healthier airs to strength restored,  
A rapturous life of Christian freedom masked  
In what but servitude had been to one  
Lacking vocation true. The Life Divine,  
‘ Hidden with God,’ is hidden from the world  
Lest Virtue should be dimmed by Virtue's praise.  
Heroic Virtue least by men is prized :  
The hero in the Saint the crowd can honour,  
The Saint at best forgive. To this world's ken  
Convents, of sanctity chief citadels,

Though sanctity in every place is found,  
The snowy banners and bright oriflams  
Of that resplendent realm by Counsels ruled  
Not Precept only, spread in vain, despised  
Or for their earthly good alone revered  
Not for their claims celestial. Different far  
The lesson Mary learned. The poor were fed,  
The orphan nursed ; around the sick man's couch  
Gentle as light hovered the healing hand ;  
And beautiful seemed on mountain-tops of Truth,  
The foot that brought good tidings ! Times of trial  
To Sabbaths changed ; and many a rude, rough girl,  
Waiting another service, found a home  
Where that which years had marred returned once  
more

Like infant flesh clothing the leprous limb.  
Yet these things Mary found were blossoms only :  
The tree's deep root was secret. From the Vow  
Which bound the Will's infinitude to God  
Upwelled that peaceful strength whose fount was  
God :

From Him behind His sacramental veil  
In holy passion for long hours adored  
Came that great Love which made the bonds of earth  
Needless, thence irksome. Wondering, there she  
learned

The creature was not for the creature made  
But for the sole Creator ; that His kingdom,  
Glorious hereafter, lies around us here,  
Its visible splendour painfully suppressing,  
And waiting its transfiguration. Was it strange  
If while those Brides of Christ around her moved  
Her heart sang hymns to God ? Much had she  
suffered :

Much of her suffering gladly there she learned  
Came of her fault ; and much had kindest ends  
Not yet in her fulfilled. A light o'ershine her  
Which slays Illusion, that white snake which slimes  
The labyrinth of self-love's more tender ways  
Virtue's most specious mimic. She was loosed :  
The actual by the seeming thralldom slain ;  
Her life was from within and from above ;  
And as, when Winter dies and Spring new-born  
Her whisper breathes o'er earth, the earlier flowers—  
Unlike the wine-dark growths of Autumn dipped  
In the year's sunset—rise in lightest hues  
An astral gleam, white, green, or delicate yellow  
More light than colour, so the maiden's thoughts  
Flashed with a radiance that permitted scarce  
Human affections tragic. Oft, she told me,  
As faithless to old friends she blamed herself :  
One hand touched Calvary, one the Eternal Gates ;  
The present nothing seemed. The years passed on :  
The honeymoon of this heart-bridal waned ;  
But nothing of its spousal truth was lost,  
Nor of its serious joy. If failures came—  
And much she marvelled at her slow advance,  
And for the first time, pierced by that stern grace  
Wherein no sin looks trivial, feared ;—what then ?  
Failures that deepened humbleness but sank  
Foundations deeper for a loftier pile  
Of virtue: transports homeward heavenward summoned  
For more disinterested love made way,  
More perfect made Obedience.

If a Soul,

Half-way to heaven, death past, once more to earth  
Were sent, it could but feel as Mary felt  
When on the convent grates a letter smote



Loud, harsh, with summons from the outward world.  
Her sister, such its tidings, was a wife,  
(That matron whom you praised :—ay, comely is she,  
And good ; laborious, kindly, faithful, true ;  
Yet Time has done Time's work, her spiritual beauty  
Transposing gently to a lower key ;)  
Her grandmother bereft, and weak through age,  
Needed her tendance. Would the younger come ?  
Alas ! what could she ? Duty stretched from far  
An iron hand that stayed her mounting steps ;  
The little novices wept loud, ' Abide ! '  
Long on her neck the saintly sisterhood  
Hung ere they blessed her : then she turned and went.

And so once more she trod this rocky vale,  
And scarcely older looked at twenty-six  
Than at sixteen. Before so gentle, now  
A humbler gentleness was o'er her thrown ;  
Nor ruffled was she ever as of yore  
With gusts of flying spleen : nor feared she now  
Hindrance unlovely, or the word that jarred.  
The sadness hers at first dispers'd ere long,  
And such strange sweetness came to her, men said  
A mad dog would not bite her. Lowliest toils  
Were by her hand ennobled : Labour's staff  
Beneath it burst in blossom. In the garden,  
'Mid earliest birds, and singing like a bird,  
She moved, her grandmother asleep. She mixed  
The reverence due to years with tenderness  
The infant's claim. 'Twas hers to bring the crutch,  
Nor mark the lameness ; hers with question apt  
To prompt, not task, the memory. Tales twice-told  
Wearied not her, nor orders each with each  
At odds, nor causeless blame. Wiles she had many



To anticipate harsh moods, lest one rash word  
Might draw a cloud 'twixt helpless eld and heaven,  
Blotting the Eternal Vision felt not seen  
By hearts in grace. With works of gay caprice  
Needless—yet prized—she made the spectre Want  
Seem farther off. Thus love in narrow space  
Built a great world. The grandmother preferred  
To her, that dreamful girl of old, the woman  
Who from the mystic precinct first had learned  
Humanity, yet seemed a human creature  
O'erruled by some angelic guest. At heart  
Ever a nun, she ministered with looks  
That healed the sick. The newly-widowed door  
Its gloom remitted when she passed ; grey foes  
Downtrod their legend of old wrongs. To her  
Sacred were those that grieved ;—those tearless yet  
Sacred scarce less because they smiled nor knew  
The ambushed fate before them. When a child,  
Grey-haired companionship or solitude  
Had pleased her more than childish mates ; but now  
All the long eves of summer in the porch  
The children of her sister and the neighbours  
A spotless flock, sat round her. From her smiles  
The sluggish mind caught light, the timid heart  
Courage and strength. Unconscious thus, each day  
Her soft and blithesome feet one letter traced  
In God's gold Book above. So passed her life ;—  
Sorrow had o'er it hung a gentle cloud ;  
But, like an autumn-mocking day in Spring  
Dewy and dim yet ending in pure glory,  
The sweets were sweeter for the rain, the growth  
Stronger for shadow.

You have seen her tomb !  
Upon the young and beautiful it closed :

Her grandmother yet lingers ! What is Time ?  
Shut out the sun, and all the summer long  
The fruit-tree stands as barren as the rock ;  
May's offering March can bring us. Of the twain  
The younger doubtless in the eyes of God  
Had inly lived the longest. She had learned  
From action much, from suffering more, far more,  
For Earth-experience is a sword whose point  
Makes way for Truth. Her trials, great and little,  
And trials ever keep proportion just  
With high vocations and the spirit's growth,  
Had done their work till all her inner being,  
Freed from asperities, in the light of God  
Shone like the feet of some old crucifix  
Kissed into smoothness. Here I fain would end,  
Leaving her harboured ; but her stern, kind fates  
Not thus forewent her. Like her life her death,  
Not negative or neutral ; great in pains,  
In consolations greater. Many a week  
Much ailed her ; what the cause remained in doubt ;  
When certainty had come she trembled not :  
Fixed was her heart. Those pangs that shook her  
frame

Like tempests roaring round a mountain church  
Shook not that peace within her ! She was thank-  
ful ;

‘ More pain if such Thy Will, and patience more,’  
This was her prayer ; or wiping from moist eyes  
The trembling tear, she whispered, ‘ Give me, Lord,  
On earth Thy cleansing fire that I may see  
Sooner Thy Face, death past ! ’

Alleviations,  
Many and great, God granted her. Once more  
Her sister was her sister ! Unlike fortunes

Had placed at angles those two lives that once  
Basked side by side ; and love that could not die  
Had seemed to sleep. It woke : and, as from mist,  
Once more shone out their childhood ! Laughed and  
flashed

Once more the garden-beds whose bright accost  
Had cheered them for their parents mourning. Tears  
Remembered stayed the course of later tears ;  
The prosperous from the unprosperous sister sought  
Heart-peace ; nor wealth nor care could part them  
more ;

And sometimes Margaret's children seemed to her  
As children of another ! Greetings sweet  
Cheered her from distant regions. Once it chanced  
The nuns a relic sent her ne'er before  
Seen in our vales, a fragment of that Cross  
Whereon the world's Redeemer hung three hours :  
The neighbours entering knelt and wept, and smote  
Their breasts ; her hands she raised in prayer ; and  
straight

Such Love, such Reverence in her heart, there rose  
Her anguish, like a fiend exorcised, fled ;  
And for an hour at peace she lay as one  
Imparadised. A solace too was hers  
Known but to babes. Her body, not her mind,  
Was racked ; the pang to come she little feared,  
Nor lengthened out morose the pang foregone ;  
Once o'er, to sleep she sank in thankful prayer.

A week ere Mary died all suffering left her ;  
And from the realms of glory beams, as though  
Further restraint they brooked not, fell on her  
Yet militant below, as there she lay  
In monumental whiteness, spirit-lit.

The anthems of her convent charmed once more  
Her dreams ; and scents from woods where she had  
sat

In tears. Oft spake she of her wandering days ;  
Herself she scarcely seemed to see in them ;  
Plainly thus much I saw : When all went well,  
Danger stood nigh ; but soon as sorrow came  
Within that darkness nearer by her side  
Walked her good Angel. In that latest week  
Some treasures hidden ever near her heart  
She showed me—faded flowers ; her mother's hair ;  
Gold pieces that have raised our chapel's Cross ;  
A riband by her youthful comrade worn :  
Upon its cover some few words I found  
There traced when first beyond the western main  
She heard the homeless cuckoo's cry well-known :  
' When will my People to their land return ? '

From the first hour her grandchild sank, once more  
She that for years bed-ridden lay had risen,  
And, autumn past, put forth a wintry strength,  
Ministering. Her frame was stronger than her  
mind ;

O'er that at times a dimness hung, like cloud  
That creeps from pine to pine. Inly she missed  
Her wonted place of homage lost ; she mused  
Sadly upon the solitary future ;  
But in her there abode a rock-like will,  
And from her tearless service night or day  
No man might push her. Seldom spake the woman :  
She called her grandchild by her daughter's name,  
Her daughter buried thirty years and more,  
And once she said in wrath, ' Why toil they thus  
Nora is dead.' She laboured till the end :  
It came—that mortal close ! 'Twas Christmas Eve ;

Far, far away were heard the city bells :  
The sufferer slept. At midnight I went forth ;  
Along the ice-filmed road a dull gleam lay,  
And a sepulchral wind in woods far off  
Sang dirges deep. Upon her crutches bent  
The aged woman stood beside the door,  
With that long gaze intense which is an act  
Silently looking toward that hill of graves  
We trod this day ; a sinking moon shone o'er it :  
Then whispered she—the light of buried years  
Edging once more her eyes—‘ Each Saturday,  
Of those that in that churchyard sleep three Souls,  
Their penance done, ascend, and are with God.’

Thus as she spake a cry was heard within,  
And many voices raised the Litany  
For a departing Soul. Long time—too long—  
Had seemed that dying ! Now the hour was come  
And change ineffable announced that Death  
At last was standing on the floor. O hour !  
When in brief space our life is lived again !  
Down cast its latest stake ! when fiends ascend,  
Beckoning the phantoms of forgotten wrong  
Conscience to scare, or launching as from slings  
Temptations new ; while Angels hold before us  
The Cross unshaken as the sun in heaven,  
And whisper, ‘ Christ.’ O hour ! when prayer is all ;  
And they that clasp the hand are drawn apart  
By the world’s breadth from that they love ! The  
act

Sin’s dread bequest that makes an end of sinning,  
Long lasted, while the heart-strings snapt, and all  
The elements of the wondrous sensuous world  
Slid from the fading sense, and those poor fingers,  
As the loose precipice of life down crumbled,

Plucked as at roots. Storm-winged the hours rushed  
by ;

There lay she like some bark on midnight seas  
Now toiling through the windless vale, anon  
Hurled on and up to meet the implacable blast  
Upon the rolling ridge, when not a foot  
Can tread the decks, and all the sobbing planks  
Tremble o'erspent. The morning dawned at last  
Whitening the frosty pane ; the lights removed,  
Save that tall candle in her hand sustained  
By others, she descried it : ' Ah ! ' she said,  
' Thank God ! another day ! ' Then, noting one  
Who near her knelt, she said ' The night is sped  
And you have had no sleep ; alas ! I thought  
Ere midnight I should die.' Her eyelids closed ;  
Into a sleep as quiet as a babe's  
Gradual she sank ; and while the ascending sun  
Shot 'gainst the western hill his earliest beam,  
In sleep, without a sigh, her spirit passed.

I would you could have seen her face in death !  
I would you could have heard that last dread rite,  
The mighty Mother's, o'er the stormy gulf  
And all the moanings of the unknown abyss  
Flinging victorious anthems or the strength  
Of piercing prayer : ' Oh ! ye at least, my friends,  
Have pity on me ! plead for me with God ! '  
That Rite complete, the dark procession wound  
Interminably through the fields and farms,  
While wailing like a midnight wind, the *keen*  
Expired o'er moor and heath. At eve we reached  
The graveyard ; slowly, as to-day, the sun  
Behind a tomb-like bank of leaden cloud  
Dropt while the coffin sank, and died away  
The latest Miserere——

More than once

I would have ceased ; but he, my friend and guest,  
Or touched or courteous, willed me to proceed.  
Perhaps that tale the wild scene harmonized  
By sympathy occult ; perhaps it touched him,  
Contrasting with his recent life—with England,  
With Oxford, long his home ; its ordered pomp ;  
Its intermingled groves, and fields, and spires,  
Its bridges spanning waters calm and clear ;  
The frequentation of its courts ; its chimes ;  
Its sunset towers, and strangely youthful gardens  
That breathe the ardours of the budding year  
On the hoar breadth of grove-like cloisters old,  
Chapels, and libraries, and statued halls,  
England's still saintly City ! Time has there  
A stone tradition built like that all round  
Woven by the inviolate hedges, where the bird  
Her nest has made and warbled to her young,  
May after May secure, since the third Edward  
Held his last tournament, and Chaucer sang  
To Blanche and to Philippa lays of love—  
Not like Iernian records. Sad we rose,  
That tale complete ; and, after silence long,  
As homeward through the braided forest-skirt  
We trod the moonlight-spotted rocks, my friend  
Resumed, with pregnant matter oft more just  
In thought than application ; yet his voice  
Was softer than it wont to be. At last,  
After our home attained, we turned, and lo !  
With festal fires the hills were lit ! Thine eve,  
Saint John, had come once more ; and for thy  
sake,  
As though but yesterday thy crown was won,  
Amid their ruinous realm uncomforted



The Irish people triumphed. Gloomy lay  
The intermediate space : thence brightlier burned  
The circling fires beyond it. 'Lo !' said I,  
'Man's life as viewed by Ireland's sons ; a vale  
With many a pitfall throng'd, and shade, and briar,  
Yet over-blown by angel-haunted airs,  
And by the Light Eternal girdled round.'

Brief supper passed, within the porch we sat  
As fire by fire burned low. We spake ; were mute ;  
Resumed ; but our discourse was gently toned,  
Touched by a spirit from that wind-beaten grave,  
Which breathed among its pauses, as of old  
That converse Bede records, when by the sea,  
'Twixt Tyne and Wear, facing towards Lindisfarne,  
Saxon Ceolfrid and his Irish guest,  
Evangelist from old Iona's isle,  
'Mid the half Pagan land in cloisters dim  
Discuss'd the Tonsure, and the Paschal time,  
Sole themes whereon, in sacred doctrine one,  
They differed ; but discussed them in such sort  
That mutual reverence deeper grew. We heard  
The bridgeless brook that sang far off, and sang  
Alone : for not among us builds that bird  
Which changes light to music, haply ill-pleased  
That Ireland bears not yet, in song's domain  
To Spenser worthy fruit. Our beds at last,  
Wearied, yet glad, we sought. Ere long the wind,  
Gathering its manifold voices and the might  
Of all its wills in valleys far, and rolled  
From wood to wood o'er ridge and ravine, woke  
Those Spectres which o'erhang my sleep in storm,  
A hundred hills to me by sound well known,  
That stand dark clustered in the night, and bend  
With rainy skirt o'er lake and prone morass,



Or by sea-bays lean out procumbent brows,  
Waiting the rising sun.

At morn we met

Once more, my friend and I. The evening's glow  
Had from his feelings passed : in their old channels  
They flowed, scarce tinged. But still his thoughts  
retained

The trace of late impressions quaintly linked  
With kindred thought-notes earlier. Half his mind  
Scholastic was ; his fancy deep : the age  
Alone had stamped him modern. Much he spake  
Of England wise and wealthy—now no more,  
He said, ‘a haughty nation proud in arms,’  
Nor, as in Saxon times, a crownèd child  
Propped 'gainst the Church's knee ; but Ocean's  
Queen,

Spanning the world with golden zone twin-clasped  
By Commerce and by Freedom ! But no less  
Of pride and suffering spake he, and that frown  
Sun-pressed on brows once pure. Of Ireland next :—  
‘How strange a race, more apt to fly than walk ;  
Soaring yet slight ; missing the good things round  
them,

Yet ever out of ashes raking gems ;  
In instincts loyal, yet respecting law  
Far less than usage : changeful, yet unchanged !  
Timid, yet enterprising : frank, yet secret :  
Untruthful oft in speech, yet living truth,  
And Truth in things divine to life preferring :—  
Scarce men ; yet possible angels ! “ Isle of Saints ! ”  
Such doubtless was your land—again it might be—  
Strong, prosperous, manly never ! ye are Greeks  
In intellect, and Hebrews in the soul :  
The solid Roman heart, the corporate strength

Is England's dower !' ' Unequally if so,'  
 I said, ' in your esteem the Isles are matched :—  
 They live in distant ages, alien climes ;  
 Native they are to diverse elements :  
 Our swan walks awkwardly upon dry land ;  
 Your boasted strength in spiritual needs so helps  
     you

As armour helps the knight who swims a flood.'  
 He laughed. ' At least nor siren streams for us,  
 Nor holy wells ! We love " the fat of the land,"  
 Meads such as Rubens painted ! Strange our fates !  
 Our feast is still the feast of fox and stork,  
 The platter broad, and amphora long-necked ;—  
 Ill-sorted yoke-mates truly. Strength, meanwhile,  
 Lords it o'er weakness !' ' Never yet,' I answered,  
 ' Was husband vassal to an intricate wife  
 But roared he ruled her ;' ere his smile had ceased,  
 Continuing thus :—' Ay ! strength o'er weakness  
     rules !

Strength hath in this no choice. But what is  
     Strength ?

Two Strengths there are. Club-lifting Hercules,  
 A mountained mass of gnarled and knotted sinews,  
 How shows he near the intense, Phœbean Might  
 That, godlike, spurns the ostent of thews o'er-  
     grown ;

That sees far off the victory fixed and sure,  
 And, without effort, wings the divine death  
 Like light, into the Python's heart ? My friend,  
 Justice is strength ; union on justice built :—  
 Good-will is strength—kind words—silence—that  
     truth

Which hurls no random charge. Your scribes long  
     time

Blow on our island like a scythèd wind :  
The good they see not, nor the cause of ill ;  
They tear the bandage from the wound half-  
healed :—

Is not such onset weakness ? Were it better,  
Tell me, free-trader staunch, for sister Nations  
To make exchange for aye of scorn for scorn,  
Or blend the nobler powers and aims of each,  
Diverse, and for that cause correlative,  
True commerce, noblest, holiest, frankest, best,  
And breed at last some destiny to God  
Glorious, and kind to man ?—If torn apart  
One must her empire lose, and one her all.'

Thus as we spake, the hall clock vast and old,  
A waif from Spain's Armada chimed eleven :  
And from the stables drew a long-hair'd boy  
Who led a horse as shaggy as a dog,  
A splenetic child of thistles and hill-blast,  
Rock-ribbed, and rich in craft of every race  
From weasel to the beast that feigns to die.  
Mounting—alas ! that friends should ever part,—  
My guest bade thus adieu : ' For good or ill  
Our lands are linked.' And I rejoined, ' For which ?  
This shall you answer when, your pledge fulfilled,  
Before the swallow you return, and meet  
The unblown Spring in our barbaric vale.'



# EARLY POEMS :

MEDITATIVE OR DEVOTIONAL.

Dedication.

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TO THE MEMORY  
OF  
SOUTHWELL AND CRASHAN.

## ODE TO JERUSALEM.

### I.

JERUSALEM, Jerusalem !  
If any love thee not, on them  
    May all thy judgments fall ;  
For every hope that crowns our earth,  
All birth-gifts of her heavenly birth  
    To thee she owes them all !

### II.

Deep was thy guilt, and deep thy woe ;  
The brand of Cain upon thy brow  
    Each shore has felt thy tread :  
No Altar now is thine ; no Priest ;  
Upon thy hearth no paschal feast :  
    The paschal moon is dead.

### III.

When from their height the Nations fall  
The kind grave o'er them strews her pall ;  
    They die as mortals die :  
But He who looked thee in the face  
Stamped there that look no years erase  
    His own on Calvary.

### IV.

Awe-struck on thee men gaze, and yet  
Confess thy greatness, own our debt

And trembling still revere  
The Royal Family of Man  
Supporting thus its blight and ban  
With constancy austere.

## V.

Those Sciences by us so prized  
The sternness of thy strength despised,  
Devices light and vain  
Of men who lack the might to live  
In that repose contemplative  
Which Asian souls maintain.

## VI.

By thee the Book of Life was writ ;  
And, wander where it may, with it  
Thy soul abroad is sent :  
Wherever towers a Christian Church  
Palace of Earth, Heaven's sacred Porch  
It is thy monument.

## VII.

Thy minstrel songs, like sounds wind-borne  
From harps on Babel boughs forlorn  
O'er every clime have swept ;  
And Christian mothers yet grow pale  
With echoes faint of Rachel's wail ;  
Our maids with Ruth have wept.

## VIII.

Thou bind'st the Present with the Past  
The prime of ages with the last ;  
The golden chain art thou  
Whereon alone all fates are hung



Of nations springing, or upsprung  
Earthward once more to bow.

## IX.

Across the World's tumultuous gate  
Thou flingest thy shadow's giant weight ;  
The mightiest birth of Time  
For all her pangs she may not bear  
Until her feast she bids thee share  
And mount her throne sublime.

## X.

Far other gaze than that he pours  
On empires round thee sunk, and shores  
That once in victory shone,  
Far other gaze and paler frown  
The great Saturnian star bends down  
On cedared Lebanon.

## XI.

He knows that thou, obscured and dim  
Thus wrestling all night long with him  
Shall victor rise at last :  
Destined thy mystic towers to rear  
More high than his declining sphere  
When, downward on the blast

## XII.

God's mightiest Angel leaps and stands,  
A Shape o'er-shadowing seas and lands ;  
And swears by Him who swore  
A faithful oath and kind to Man  
Ere worlds were shaped or years began,  
That ' Time shall be no more.'

*PERSECUTION.*

## AN ODE.

## I.

THERE was silence in the heavens  
When the Son of Man was led  
From the Garden to the Judgment ;  
Sudden silence, strange, and dread !  
All along the empyreal coasts  
On their knees the immortal hosts  
Watched with sad and wondering eyes  
That tremendous sacrifice.

## II.

THERE was silence in the heavens  
When the priest his garment tore ;  
Silence when that Twain accursed  
Their false witness faintly bore.  
Silence—though a tremor crept  
O'er their ranks—the Angels kept  
While that Judge, dismayed though proud,  
Washed his hands before the crowd.

## III.

BUT when Christ His cross was bearing,  
Fainting oft, by slow degrees,  
Then went forth the angelic thunder  
Of legions rising from their knees.  
Each bright Spirit grasped a brand ;  
And lightning flashed from band to band :  
An instant more had launched them forth  
Avenging terrors to the earth.

## IV.

Then from God there fell a glory  
Round and o'er that multitude ;  
And by every fervent angel  
With hushing hand another stood :  
Another, never seen before,  
Stood one moment and no more !  
—Peace, brethren, peace ! to us is given  
Suffering ; vengeance is for Heaven.

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*THE MARTYRDOM.*

## ANGELS.

BEARING lilies in our bosom  
Blessed Agnes, we have flown,  
Missioned from the Heaven of Heavens  
Unto thee and thee alone :  
We are coming, we are flying,  
To behold thy happy dying.

## AGNES.

Bearing lilies far before you,  
Whose fresh odours backward blown  
Light those smiles upon your faces  
Mingling sweet breath with your own  
Ye are coming, smoothly, slowly,  
To the lowliest of the lowly.

## ANGELS.

Unto us the boon was given—  
One glad message, holy maid,

On the lips of two blest Spirits  
Like an incense-grain was laid ;  
As it bears us on like lightning  
Cloudy skies are round us bright'ning.

## AGNES.

I am here, a mortal maiden :  
If our Father aught hath said  
Let me hear His words and do them—  
Ought I not to feel afraid  
As ye come your shadows flinging  
O'er a breast to meet them springing ?

## ANGELS.

Agnes, there is joy in Heaven !  
Gladness like the day is flung  
O'er the spaces never measured ;  
And from every angel's tongue  
Swell those songs of impulse vernal  
All whose echoes are eternal.

Agnes, from the depth of Heaven  
Joy is rising like a spring  
Borne above its grassy margin  
Borne in many a crystal ring ;  
Each o'er beds of wild flowers gliding,  
Over each low murmurs sliding.

When a Christian lies expiring  
Angel choirs, with plumes outspread,  
Bend above his death-bed singing  
That when Death's mild sleep is fled  
There may be no harsh transition  
While he greets the heavenly vision.

## AGNES.

Am I dreaming, blessed angels ?  
 Late ye floated two in one ;  
 Now a thousand radiant Spirits  
 Round me weave a glistening zone,  
 Lilies as they wind, extending,  
 Roses with those lilies blending.

See ! the horizon's ring they circle !  
 Now they gird the zenith blue ;  
 And now o'er every brake and billow  
 Float like mist, and flash like dew.  
 All the earth with life o'erflowing  
 Into heavenly shapes is growing !

They are rising : they are rising :  
 As they rise the veil is riven !  
 They are rising ; I am rising :  
 Rising with them into heaven ;  
 Rising with those shining legions  
 Into Life's eternal regions.

## ODE.

THE marvels of the seas and earth  
 Their works and ways, are little worth  
 Compared with man their lord :  
 He masters Nature through her laws  
 And therefore not without a cause  
 Is he by all adored.

Lord of the mighty Eye and Ear,  
Each centring an immortal sphere  
Of empire and command :  
Lord of the heavenly Breast and Brow,  
That step which makes all creatures bow,  
And the earth-subduing hand.

And yet, not loftier swells the state  
Of Man o'er shapes inanimate  
In majesty confest  
Than among men, that man by Faith  
Assured in life, confirmed in death  
Uptowers above the rest !

For God is with him ; and the end  
Of all things, downward as they tend  
Toward their term and close  
A sov'reign throne for him prepares ;  
And makes of vanquished pains and cares  
A couch for his repose !

While kingdoms lapse, and all things range  
He rules a world exempt from change ;  
He sees as Spirits see :  
And garners ever more and more  
While years roll by, an ampler store  
Of glorious liberty ;

Yea, ten times glorious when at last  
The enfranchised Soul, her trials past,  
Stands up, prepared to die ;  
And, fanning wide her swan-like plumes  
A glory flings across the glooms  
Through which her course must lie.

*VESPER HYMN.*

THE lights o'er yonder snowy range  
Shine yet, intense yet tender ;  
Or, slowly passing, only change  
From splendour on to splendour.

Before the dying eyes of Day  
Immortal visions wander ;  
Dreams prescient of a purer ray  
And morn spread still beyond her.

Lo ! heavenward now those gleams expire  
In heavenly melancholy ;  
The barrier mountains, peak and spire,  
Relinquishing them slowly.

Thus shine, O God ! our mortal Powers,  
While grief and joy refine them ;  
And when in death they fade be ours  
Thus gently to resign them !

---

*NOCTURN HYMN.*

Now God suspends its shadowy pall  
Above the world, yet still  
A steely lustre plays o'er all  
With evanescent thrill.

Softly, with favouring footstep, press  
Among those yielding bowers ;  
Over the cold dews colourless  
Damp leaves and folded flowers.

Sleep, little birds in bush and brake !  
'Tis surely ours to raise  
Our hymns ere humbler choirs awake  
Their anthem in God's praise.

The impatient zeal of faithful love  
Hath forced us from our bed ;  
But doubly blest repose will prove  
After our service said.

How dim, how still this slumbering wood !  
And O how sweetly rise  
From clouded boughs and herbs bedewed  
Their odours to the skies !

Sweet as that mood of mystery  
Where thoughts that hide their hues  
And shapes are only noticed by  
The fragrance they diffuse.

But hark ! o'er all the mountain verge  
The night-wind sweeps along ;  
O haste, and tune its echoing surge  
To a prelude song ;

A song of thanks and laud to Him  
Who makes our labour cease ;  
Who feeds with love the midnight dim  
And hearts devout with peace.

---



*ADAM REFUSES THE GIFTS OF THE  
RACE OF CAIN.*

A FRAGMENT.

I.

ENTHRONED, and mantled in a snow-white robe  
 Man's sire I saw, the Lord of all the globe ;  
 High-priest of all the Church, and Prophet sure  
 Of Him whose promised kingdom shall endure  
 Until the last of Adam's race is dead.  
 Nor crown, nor mitre rested on his head ;  
 Yet kings with awe had viewed him ! Deep and slow  
 His speech ; the words I knew not nor could know ;  
 But sighed to hear amid their golden sound  
 A melancholy echo from the ground.  
 Ages were flown since Adam's lifted hand  
 Had plucked, insurgent 'gainst Divine command,  
 That Fruit, a sacrament of death which gave  
 Perpetual life a forfeit to the grave :  
 Yet still those orbs their Maker once that saw  
 Governed the nations of the world with awe.  
 Mournful they looked, as though their sorrowing  
     weight  
 Reposed for aye on Eden's closing gate ;  
 Mournful, yet lustrous still those lordly eyes  
 First mortal mirror of the earth and skies  
 And still with piercing insight filled as when  
 God's new-made creatures passed beneath their ken  
 While he decreed, in his celestial speech,  
 Prophetic names symbolical for each.  
 All round, checkering the steep with giant shade  
 His mild and venerable race were laid,

For dance and song no wreaths as yet had won :  
 Many their strong eyes bent upon the sun,  
 Some on a sleeping infant's smiling face,  
 Wherein both Love and Faith were strong to trace  
 The destined Patriarch of a future race !

## II.

Then through the silent circle, winged with joy,  
 A radiant herald moved, a shepherd boy.  
 Wondering he stepped ; ere long, like one afraid  
 A tribute at those feet monarchal laid,  
 A Lyre, gem-dowered from many a vanished isle.  
 Thereon the Father gazed without a smile :  
 But some fair children with the bright toy played ;  
 While sound so rapturous thrilled the echoing glade  
 That Seers, cave-hid, looked up with livelier cheer ;  
 And the first childless mother wiped away a tear !

## III.

Later there came, as one who comes from far  
 A branded warrior, gloomy from the war :  
 Dark was his face, yet bright, and stern as though  
 It bent o'er that of an expiring foe,  
 Retorting still with sympathetic glare  
 The imprecating anguish imaged there !  
 A tribute too that warrior brought, a shield  
 Graven with emblems of a death-strewn field  
 And placed it at the Patriarch's feet, and spoke ;  
 ' Certain Oppressors reared an impious yoke  
 And passed beneath it brethren of their race ;  
 Therefore we rose and hewed them from their place.'  
 All pale the Patriarch sat—long time his eye  
 Fixed on the deepening crimson of the sky

Where sanguine clouds contended with the dun :  
Then turned, and whispered in the ear of one  
Who, on his death-bed, whispered to his son—  
That son beheld the Deluge !

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### *THE PLANETS ;*

OR, OLD AND NEW.

THE Legend of the last of Grecian dreams—  
A wandering Bard's. As silver stream that bounds  
Singing, from rock to rock, when through dark pines  
The moonbeams break their javelins on its mail,  
Gloom-loving splendour fairer for that gloom,  
So bright so sweet his Pagan songs, poured forth  
Full oft at rural festival : but Grace  
Came to him, that he scorned his country's Gods  
And lived, though late, true bondsman of the Cross,  
Spurning those beauteous Fables fair but false,  
All that in youth the mythic Seers had taught him,  
For Beauty deathless, sacred and eterne.  
On Asian shores he strayed while Polycarp  
Ruled yet at Smyrna ; from that Martyr old  
First heard of Christ. 'Twas there his lyre he brake :  
This was the last of all the songs he sang.

Of Love, whose golden chain makes all things one ;  
Of Zeal, that keeps earth pure ; of Majesty,  
Which, like a crown, steadies the world's great head ;  
Of Wisdom, which all these tempers and guides,  
Of Love, and Zeal, and Majesty, and Wisdom,  
Which light as stars our mortal night, and give  
Limits to Empire, and free space to Good,

Had been my thoughts. Within a bark I lay  
And in a book was reading of the Gods.  
Reading, I marvelled how that record old  
Fabled of Truth : how Song, not yet corrupt  
Like a great wave lifted the mind of man,  
And gave him ampler prospect. While I mused  
The setting sun flamed on the deep, the bells  
Pealed from a Church hardby and songs went forth :  
Then waned that radiance and the anthem died ;  
My brow dropped on the volume ; and I dreamed.

Methought it was the vigil of the day  
Of Resurrection ; when the kings alone  
Shall throng as nations. In a murmuring field  
Of harvests by autumnal suns embrowned,  
Declining softly to the Western sea  
I lay ; then night fell, cloud-like, o'er the deep.

An Angel caught me by the hands, and bore me  
Far up, and on. Ere long I stood alone  
Upon the point of a great promontory :  
A Cross was on the edge : from thence a bay  
Went back oblique into the heart of Heaven :  
Heaven's phantom mountains girt it marble-black,  
Though streaked with flying heralds of the dawn.

I on that Cross had leaned methought an hour,  
When from the bosom of that darkness old  
A glorious semblance momentarily more large,  
Emerged with speed divine : beneath his feet,  
Which scarcely touched it, was a Planet bent ;  
I marked it not at first, but deemed him flying,  
Such joy was from his lustrous forehead poured  
While his bright hair streamed back, both hands  
upheld

As though expectant of some heavenly crown !  
Like homeward bark he wound into that bay.  
A milder Star came next ; and he thereon  
Was like a youthful god : high as his lips  
He held a golden Shell ; calm-faced as one  
Who late hath sung, and for the echo waits.  
Into that haven wound he. Next I saw  
A lovely Virgin standing in white robes  
That shone like silver on the Morning Star.  
She, with one hand into her bosom pressed  
A dove : the other more than lily white  
Was ever smoothing down its snowy wings,  
And yet on it she gazed not but on Heaven.  
I turned—in minstrel's garb beside me stood  
That Youth who last had vanished ; ' Well,' he sang,  
' Doth Love, without the aid of eyes assure  
His heart ; upon some other heart reposing  
With beatings undistinguished from his own.'  
She too had passed, when loud I cried, ' Declare  
The Vision !' ' She loved much,' the youth replied,  
' Therefore to her the star of Love is given.  
But see'—and Mars towards us moved—the fourth !  
A shield was on his breast ; and, raised to Heaven,  
Both hands held high a Sword of God that beamed  
From hilt to point with blood incarnadine,  
The Cross upon his heart. His helm thrown back  
The warrior's eyes were fixed on that Sword's point,  
Which from pure ether drew a stream of fire,  
And, blazing like an amethystine star  
Poured beatific splendour on his face.  
' No other Spirit with a deeper joy,'  
Thus spake the Youth, ' from out those crimson urns  
That stand beside the everlasting Altar  
Shall drink the sacramental wine of Life.'



The third was Venus, in the solar beam  
That bathes as water-lily in clear lake ;  
Her children are a choir of loving Spirits  
Lying on violet banks by tuneful streams ;  
There on the plume-like trees the wind blows gently  
For ever gently : not a mother there  
Would fear to rock her new-born infant's cot  
Upon the topmost bough. Of these but few  
Have sojourned on the earth and striven to lure  
By gentleness your race to gentleness ;  
Oftenest not long their exile—by the sword  
Hewn down, or trampled under foot of men.  
The fourth was Mars : there dwell a hero race  
Warring on evil. Ofttimes to the earth  
Oppressed by tyrants, one of these was sent  
Breaker of chains. The Star of Jupiter  
Unto imperial Spirits doth belong :  
There, o'er its sea-like levels rise their thrones  
Like pyramids o'er Nilus kenned : on earth  
Men stare in wonder at their haughty feet,  
That tread your Planet like a thing foredoomed.  
In Saturn dwell the Prophets, far apart,  
'Mid groves, and caves in sequence hollowed out  
Within the walls of the precipitous mountains.  
Before them, like a veil, from heights unknown  
The noiseless torrents stream scarce pierced by beams  
From seven broad moons : their wrinkled foreheads  
old  
They bend o'er emblomed scrolls and books of Fate.  
Of these but few have ever dwelt on earth.  
Mortal ! in Heaven was concord thus with men !  
Love, Zeal heroic, Majesty, and Wisdom,  
There where ye guessed not lived and wrought and  
reigned :

In seats by Pagan fancies long usurped  
They wound their choral dances thus round earth :  
Men their own greatness knew not, but exchanged  
For dust, celestial sympathy.' He spake,  
And light flashed from him making all things plain !  
'Tell me thy name.' 'I am,' the Youth replied  
'The Shaping Instinct of the universe  
By bards of old named Hermes. I bestow  
Voice on all being ; I of every Art  
Am father ; earlier, in lone wastes I cry  
Scaring those demons which in dance obscene  
Trample to mire of clay the heart of man  
Which should be singing ever, like this Shell  
Whose warbling but the echo is of strains  
Yon vanished Planets ever sang. Henceforth  
They rest :—but hark their sabbath song !' He raised  
That Shell, and straight a harmony so rich  
It seemed the blending of all lovely voices,  
Moved o'er us like one wave that fills a bay :  
And 'mid that Pæan murmuring I could hear  
A low deep music tremulent though sweet  
With that Eolian anthem sink and rise.

    ' My task is done,' it said ;  
' My wrinkled hands have rest ; the Crown is made :  
    But who of earth can wear it ?  
Whose brows are strong and broad enough to bear it ?  
    Let him speak, let him speak,  
    For my veins are waxing weak ;  
These eyes no longer can their vigil keep,  
My lids are growing heavy—I must sleep.'

A sound that quelled all other sounds, as stars  
At sunrise, shook my heart ; and I beheld  
Upon another and a larger sphere



Than all which yet had passed—a sphere unguessed  
By them of Pagan times—an Old Man standing :  
Older than all the Prophets seemed that Man,  
Older, methought than Time himself ; sea-sands  
Had numbered not his childhood's years. His hair  
And beard rolled down athwart his breast, more  
white

Than snows when Boreal lights from polar skies  
Shine keen on icy streams, or lies the Moon  
Dead on the glacier's lap—  
O'er his calm face bright thoughts went sweeping  
ever

Like gleams from rippling waters heaved o'er rocks :  
His eyes seemed yet to hold those vanished stars.  
I closed my own ; and when I dared to look  
He had not wound into that bay but passed  
Far to the North. That Youth beside me still  
Fixed on him eyes with awe distent, as though  
In garden-haunt long-loved a man at ease  
Up glancing o'er the lily and the rose,  
Confronted stood by some white mountain range  
Marvel till then unkenned, though ever there,  
Dwarfing a subject world. At last he spake ;  
' Him knew I not of old : Him, knowing now,  
I fear to name : Old Bard of Grecian Race  
The time of Finite Beauty is gone by :  
The time of all the Infinitudes is come  
And Beauty throned mid all. Lay down thine ear  
Down to this Shell, and hear Him what He speaks  
With that crystalline bass which like a sea  
Ingulfs all other sounds or lets them float  
As bubbles on the surface.' I replied,  
' Not so ! I will not hear Him lest I die ;'  
And in that terror woke.

*A TALE OF THE MODERN TIME.*

JUNE 1840.

## PART I.

## I.

AN old man once I knew whose aged hair  
A summer brilliance evermore retained ;  
Youthful his voice and full not flawed nor spare ;  
His cheek all smooth and like a child's engrained,  
Or marble altar innocently stained  
With roses mirrored in its tablet white—  
Like May his eye ; his foot-fall slow but light.

## II.

Yet no one marvelled at him : of his ways  
Rarely men spake as of the buried dead ;  
And dropped him from their lips with trivial phrase :  
' Gentle he was, and kind,' the neighbours said,  
' Albeit an idle life and vain he led.'  
Odours he loved from flowers at twilight dim ;  
And breath and song of morn : children loved him.

## III.

I have beheld him on a wintry plant  
An eye delighted bending full an hour !  
As though the Spring o'er every tendril scant  
Crept 'neath his ken. Methought he had the power  
To see the growing root plain as the flower.  
O'er a leaf's margin he would pore and gaze  
As o'er some problem of the starry maze !

## IV.

Over a rose his palm he loved to curve  
As though it brought him warmth from out the  
ground.  
Instinctively his step would often swerve  
Following slow streams that down in darkness  
wound :  
His body there he bent above the sound  
Heard but by him. A virgin world he trod  
As though it were the precinct of some god.

## V.

I wondered at him long : but youth and awe  
Restrained me from demanding of his story.  
At last, it chanced one day this man I saw  
Reclining 'neath an oak rifted and hoary  
Last tree of a wild, woodland promontory.  
Far round, below, the forest deep and warm  
Lay waving in the light of an illumined storm.

## VI.

I placed me at his feet : his eyes were closed ;  
Celestial brightness hung upon his mien,  
And all his features, tranquilly composed :  
I gazed on him, and cried, ' Where hast thou been  
In youth ? What done, what read, what heard,  
what seen ?'  
Irreverent was the inquest : yet the man  
Looked on me with a smile, and thus began.

## VII.

The Tale, true told, of every Human Being  
Were awful ; yet upon each new-born child,

As though none else there lived, the Eye All-seeing  
    Rested in glory ! Heaven looked down and smiled :  
    And choirs of joyful Angels undefiled  
Around the cradle sang and evermore  
In youth walked near him, after, and before.

## VIII.

Stranger ! the veil of Sense in mercy hides  
    The perils round us, as the mercies ! Say,  
Amid the forest on the mountain sides  
    What miles of mazes hast thou tracked to-day ?  
    Had some black chasm girt visibly thy way  
Couldst thou secure have wandered thus ? Not so—  
The danger is not ours while danger none we know.

## IX.

My life hath been a marvel. Thine no less.  
    If thou that marvel hast not yet discerned  
Lament not therefore. Unto wretchedness  
    That knowledge grew for which our parents yearned.  
    The best and happiest oftime least have learned  
Of Man's dread elements—what dust—what spirit—  
That which we are, what have, what make, and what  
    inherit.

## X.

Action in trance, in panic Thought were lost,  
    If all we are we knew ourselves to be.  
O'er a great deep, now calm, now tempest-tossed  
    Rises one rock ; but, hid below the sea  
    That rock slants down—a mountain ! Such are we—  
Our being's summit only o'er the deeps  
Ascends : the rest is blind, and in the abysses sleeps.

## XI.

In Man the Finite from the Depth ascends :  
Centre is Man of all men hear or see ;  
Chapel where Time with Incorruption blends  
Where Dust is wedded to Divinity.  
All but omnipotent in Will is he.  
Freedom his awful privilege ! Like a God  
He walks at noon ; at night lies cold beneath the sod.

## XII.

Thou seekest Knowledge : every lore we prize  
But as a lamp thereby ourself to know.  
Stranger ! 'tis well within to turn our eyes  
If we look heavenward having turned them so.  
Horror unnamed and phantom forms of woe  
Rebuke the haughtier quest. With single aim  
If thou my tale require receive in joy the same.

## PART II.

## I.

HAPPY my childhood was ; devout and glad :  
My youth was full of glory, joy, and might,  
Like some volcanic morn, and tempest-clad,  
In tropic regions, when from gulfs of night  
Day leaps at once to the empyreal height.  
Strength without bound in spirit, body, and soul,  
I felt : and in my rapture mocked control.

## II.

In the madness of that strength I went abroad  
Where'er Ambition called, or Passion led :

Full many a deep my ploughing bark hath scored :  
Full many a plain hath echoed to my tread :  
All enterprise I sought : all books I read :  
All thoughts I pondered murmuring in my mirth  
That text, ' Be thou, O Man, the Lord of Earth.'

## III.

Deeply I studied in all tomes and tongues  
The Historic legend, Philosophic page :  
More deeply yet those earlier mythic songs  
Built up by Bard for legislative Sage  
Himself a builder up, from age to age,  
Of States—true poems—Policies sublime,  
Wherein well-balanced Functions metre make, and  
rhyme.

## IV.

All Art and Science at the Gentile feast  
Of Western pride advanced, I knew right well :  
And laughed to mark the great Book of the East  
Push on through all as through a garden dell  
Bright with frail flowers and paved with glittering  
shell  
Some Asian Elephant. I sought within  
For God, and there alone ; and recked not of my sin.

## V.

Corporeal instincts only I denied :  
My larger concupiscence temperance feigned.  
Humble oft seemed I through the excess of pride  
And calm of conscious strength. No muscle  
strained ;  
That which the eye desired, the hand attained :

Too proud for Pride's less triumphs I had sworn  
To shun them ; or, first won, to fling them back in  
scorn.

## VI.

Was I then wicked ? Child ! applauding nations  
Such question asked, had called me great and good.  
I loved my kind—but more their acclamations :  
My thoughts were birds of prey and snatched that  
food  
From weak and strong to gorge their infant brood :—  
Much knowing, this I knew not. But the hour  
Was come that proved at last my fancied power.

## VII.

One day a mountain's summit I was pacing :  
Through cloudy chasms the sunbursts fell thereon ;  
Over its plain the mighty winds were racing  
Quiring Eolian anthems in loud tone.  
Long time I walked in pride and walked alone :  
And what I was revolved—and turned again,  
To mark the far off towns and visible main.

## VIII.

Man I considered then : and I looked forth  
Upon the works and wonders of his hand :  
The deep his beaten road, his palace earth ;  
Commanding all things ; yet beneath command  
Of Mind—whereof I grasped the magic wand.  
—Fronting the sun, that set in blood, I saw  
Man's shape against its disk ; and yet I felt not awe.

## IX.

All treasures of my Thought again I spread  
Unrolled as in a map before my eyes ;

And walked among them with a conqueror's tread  
That moves o'er fields of hard-won victories,  
Dreaming of mightier yet. A long disguise  
Fell from me in that rapture ; and I trod  
A worshipper no longer but a God !

## X.

Towards me a throne descended through the air—  
Then lo ! the crown of my demoniac Pride  
Updrawn, raised up my horror-stricken hair !  
For, wheresoe'er I wandered, by my side  
Another step appeared to tread and glide :  
No mortal form was near : and in the abyss  
Of heaven, the mountain floors are echoless.

## XI.

I stopped ; it stopped : I walked ; it walked : I turned :  
My fears I mocked, unworthy of a man.  
Then a cold poison from that heart self-spurned  
Welled forth : and I, with eyes unfilmed, began  
Once more my life and inmost heart to scan :  
Till suddenly what shape in soul I was  
Before me I beheld plainly as in a glass.

## XII.

Then my disease I knew ; but not the cure.  
Lightning, sent flaming from the breast of heaven,  
Revealed my sins long-hid from lure to lure :  
Beams from the eyes of God, like shafts were driven  
Against me : to her depth my soul was riven  
Whereof each portion, conscious and amazed,  
In stupor of despair upon the other gazed.



## XIII.

Thus on my throne, that marble mountain height,  
My Soul I saw ! I went I know not whither.  
Down like a tempest fell from heaven the night :  
I heard the sea and rushed in panic thither ;  
By ghost-like clouds, and woods my step made  
wither,  
And rock, and chasm that seemed to gape and sever,  
I rushed—and rushed, methought, for ever and for  
ever.

## PART III.

## I.

I WOKE in a great cavern of the main.  
The wave rolled in upon its strong breast bearing  
A storm of icy wind and cloudy rain  
With sound as if of souls that died despairing :  
The billows, that rough beach harrowing and tearing,  
Thundered far off : while morning, just begun,  
Peered dimly through the spray, and through the  
shadows dun.

## II.

That shore was piled with death, like Nature's bier.  
There, whitening spread a sea-beast's mouldering  
bones :  
The rifted wings of some dead eagle here.  
Over the wet cliff went funereal moans.  
Yet calm at first I paced those wave-washed stones,  
Whose crash the deadlier sound awhile could quell  
Of that low step close by, my spirit's knell.

## III.

Still, still, where'er I turned that step would follow.

My fate above me hung as by a thread :

Beneath me yawned the earth, a vast veiled hollow !

To battle-fields athirst for death I fled.

Yet there, while headlong hosts beside me sped,  
That footstep still I heard and knew from all ;  
Now harsh, now dull as moth fretting a coffin's pall.

## IV.

Thick, thick like leaves from autumn's skeleton woods

The shafts went by me, and as idly went.

Then back I turned into my solitudes

As slow, in sullen cloud of rage o'er-spent,

As mountain beast into dim forest tent,

With hunger unabated, when the night

Melts ; and the eastern wolds spread wide in hated  
light.

## V.

Stranger ! I tell you part : I speak not all.

Thenceforth I walked alone ; and joined my kind  
Only when lured by some black funeral :

On capital cities oft, with watchings blind,

I gazed, what time rushed forth the freezing wind  
Between their turrets and the wintry stars ;  
All day I lay in tombs, or caves dim-lit with spars.

## VI.

On peaks eclipsing to its rim the ocean

Hath been my dwelling : rivers I have seen

Whose sound alone dispersed a gradual motion

O'er cloud-like woods, their deep primeval screen.

Sand-worlds my feet have trod beneath the sheen

Of spheres unnamed. From zone to zone I fled  
As though each land in turn grew fire below my  
tread.

## VII.

But Heaven had ended now my time of sorrow  
When most I seemed in penal horror bound :  
Dreamless one night I slept, and on the morrow  
Strange tears now first amid the dew I found  
Wherewith my heavy hair and cheeks were drowned ;  
And in my heart, fanned by that morning air,  
There lay, as I walked on, my childhood's long-lost  
prayer.

## VIII.

Wearied, I sat upon a sunny bank,  
Ridged o'er a plain yet white with virgin snows  
Though now each balmy noon and midnight dank  
Lightened the burden of the vernal rose ;  
My eyes, their wont it was till daylight's close,  
Fixed on my own still shadow, in that light  
Intense keenly defined, and dark as night.

## IX.

I hung above it : sudden, by that shade  
Another shadow rested ; faint and dim :  
At first I thought my tears the phantom made ;  
Then cried ' I do but dream it, form and limb.'  
In horror then abroad I seemed to swim :  
Then my great agony grew calm and dumb ;  
For now I knew indeed my destined hour was come.

## X.

My spirit's foe was now the spoil to claim :  
My heart's chill seemed his hand upon my heart—

O marvel ! clearer while that shade became  
No mocking fiend, I saw, no lifted dart ;  
But a dejected Mourner ! down, apart,  
His head declined : one hand in grief he pressed  
Upon the heaving shadow of a sorrowing breast.

## XI.

The other round my neck was thrown, so fair,  
So kind, so gentle, none thereon might gaze  
Nor feel that Love alone had placed it there !  
There dropped the cloud of my Self-haunted days.  
He who for years had tracked my wandering ways  
Had followed me in love ! O Virgin-born,  
Thy shadow was the light of my eternal morn !

## XII.

Stranger ! there came a joy to me that hour ;  
Such joy that never can it leave my soul :  
All Heaven, condensed to one ambrosial flower,  
Fell on my bosom—Truth's inviolate whole !  
Obedience was the way ; Love was the goal :  
God, the true Universe, around me lay :  
Systems and suns thenceforth were motes in that  
clear ray !

## XIII.

From that time saw I what 'tis Heaven to see,  
That God is God indeed, and good to Man.  
Theist then first. Who Love's Reality  
Hath proved, forgets himself to probe and scan.  
Knowledge for him remits her ancient ban :  
Back fly those demons outwardly to sin  
That lure the soul or turn our inquest sad within.

## XIV.

Then looked I up ; and drank from Heaven that light  
Which makes the world within and world around  
Alone intelligible, pure, and bright :

My forehead then, but not by me, was crowned :

Then my lost youth, no longer sought, was found :  
My penance then complete ; or turned to pain  
So sweet, the enamoured heart embraced it like a gain.

## XV.

My kind, new-vested in the eternal glory

Of God made Man, glorious to me became.

Thenceforth those crowns that shine in mortal story

I deemed it grief to bear, madness to claim.

To be a man seemed now man's loftiest aim.

True Rule seemed this—to wait on one the least

Of those who fight God's fight, or join His kingly feast.

## XVI.

Then the Three Virtues bade me kneel and drink :

Then the Twelve Gifts fell from the heavenly tree :

Then from the Portals Seven, and crystal brink,

Dread Sacraments and sweet came down to me.

Then saw I plain that Saintly Company

Through whom, as Living Laws, that world which  
Sense

Conceals, is ruled of God, by Prayer's Omnipotence.

## XVII.

Thus in high trance, and the way unitive,

I watched one year : which sabbath ended, God

Stirred up once more my nest, and bade me live,

Active and suffering. So again I trod

The temporal storm and wrestled with the flood ;  
And laboured long ; and, by His grace, behold,  
Two grains I brought, or three, to swell the hills of  
gold.

## XVIII.

Lastly, my faculties of body and mind  
Decayed, through God's high will and boundless  
love,  
And from the trunk whereon they grew declined,  
As leaves from trees or plumes from moulting dove.  
Thenceforth, more blest, I soared no more, nor  
strove ;  
But sat me down, and wait the end, as waits,  
Sun-warmed, a beggar by great palace gates.

## XIX.

Stranger ! this tale of one man's life is over.  
No knowledge mine in youth have I unlearned :  
But I the sense was gifted to discover  
Of lore possessed long since, yet undiscerned :  
Truths which, as abstract or remote, I spurned  
In youth, as real most my heart now prizes ;  
And, what of old looked real, now as dream despises ;

## XX.

Or but like dreams reveres. Hollow and vain  
To me the pageants of this world appear ;  
Or truth but symbolled to the truthful brain.  
The future world I find already here ;  
The unbeholden palpable and dear :  
Firm as a staff to lean on ; or a rod  
Of power miraculous, and sent by God.

## XXI.

Stranger, farewell! Far off a bell is tolling :  
 A bridal or a funeral bell—whate'er  
 It chaunts, in harmony the tones are rolling.  
 All bells alike summon mankind to prayer !  
 Yea, and for me those twain one day shall pair  
 Their blended chimes to one. When I am dead  
 Stain not with tears my grave : it is a bridal bed.

## XXII.

He ceased. The inmost sense of that I heard  
 I know not : yet, because the man was wise,  
 His legend I have written word for word.  
 All things hold meaning : to unclouded eyes  
 Where eagle never soared are auguries.  
 It may be then this weed some balm doth bear ;  
 Some cure for sight long dim ; some charm against  
 despair.

*MAGDALENE IN THE DESERT.*

## I.

SAY, who that woman kneeling sole  
 Amid yon desert bare ?  
 The cold rain beats her bosom,  
 The night-wind lifts her hair—  
 It is the holy Magdalene,  
 O listen to her prayer.  
 ‘ Lord, I have prayed since eventide :  
 And midnight now hath spread

Her dusky pall abroad o'er all  
The living and the dead.  
The stars each moment shine more large,  
Down-gazing from the skies :  
O Father of the sorrowful  
Turn thus on me Thine eyes !'

## II.

Hark, thunder shakes the cliff far off !  
The woods in lightning glare ;  
The eagle shivers in her nest  
The lion in his lair :  
And yet, now trembling and now still,  
She makes the same sad prayer.  
' Lord of the sunshine and the storm !  
The darkness and the day !  
Why should I fear if Thou art near ?  
And Thou art near alway !  
Thus in the wilderness, Thy Son  
Was tempted, Lord, by Thee :  
He triumphed in that awful strife :  
O let Him plead for me.'

## III.

How often must that woman pray ?  
How long kneel sighing there ?  
O joy to see the Holy Cross  
Clasped to a breast so fair !—  
Speak louder, blessed Magdalene,  
And let me join thy prayer.  
' Lord ! Thou hast heard my plaint all night ;  
And now the airs of morn  
My forehead fan, my temples wan,  
My face, and bosom worn !



O ! o'er my weak and wildered soul,  
Make thus Thy Spirit move ;  
That I may feel the light once more  
And answer love with love !'

---

*ASSOCIATION OF IDEAS.*

I.

'THOSE destined Thoughts that haunt my breast,  
And throb, and heave, and swell,  
Impatient of their painful rest  
And state invisible,  
Those Thoughts at last must meet the day,  
And with me dwell, or on me prey :  
On me, on me those Thoughts must call  
And act, and live, and move abroad :  
I am the mother of them all :  
Be Thou their Father, God !'

II.

Thus prayed I ; musing on that law  
By which the children of the brain  
Their linked generations draw,  
A melancholy train  
From moods long past which feigned to die  
But in whose quickening ashes lie  
Immortal seeds of pain or pleasure  
No foot can crush, no will control,  
No craft transmute, no prescience measure,  
Dread harvests of the ripening soul !

*REALITY.*

Love thy God, and love Him only :  
And thy breast will ne'er be lonely.  
In that one great Spirit meet  
All things mighty, grave, and sweet.  
Vainly strives the soul to mingle  
With a creature of our kind :  
Vainly hearts with hearts are twined ;  
For the deepest still is single.  
An impalpable resistance  
Holds like natures still at distance.  
Mortal ! love that Holy One !  
Or dwell for aye alone.

---

*HUMANITY.*

## I.

EARTH'S green expanse : her dawns one wave of light :  
Her soft winds creeping o'er the forest tall :  
Her silence ; and the comfort of her night ;  
Are these then all ?  
All thou canst give to me,  
Humanity ?

## II.

Tears running down the track of buried smiles :  
Time's shades condensed into the sable pall :  
Hope that deserts ; and Gladness that beguiles ;  
Are these then all ?  
All thou canst give to me,  
Humanity ?

## III.

I saw a Spirit dark 'twixt Earth and Heaven,  
 Holding a cup in both hands lest it fall—  
 O friends! a mournful life to us were given,  
     If Earth were all!  
 But He who lives for aye hath looked on thee,  
     Humanity.

---

## VIA INTELLIGENTIÆ.

O WASH thine eyes with many a bitter tear ;  
 And all things shall grow clear.  
 Bend that proud forehead nearer to the ground ;  
 And catch a far foot's sound.  
 Say ! wouldst thou know what faithful suppliants feel ?  
 Thou, too, even thou, must kneel.  
 Do but thy part ; and ask not why or how :  
 Religion is a Vow.  
 They sang not idle songs ; pledges they made  
 For thee, an infant, laid  
 In the Church's lucid bosom. These must thou  
 Fulfil, or else renounce ! Fulfil them *now*.  
 A Cross, and not a wreath was planted on thy brow.

---

FORWARD, a step or two, where'er we go  
 We gaze ; not on the spot our feet are treading :  
 Reading, we look along, or glance below,  
 Unconscious of the letters we are reading.

The Future moulds the Present. Do not halt  
To probe, or mourn, each felt, or fancied fault ;  
'Steadfast by Faith,' who treads where Hope hath  
trod,  
Following her wingèd Sister to the throne of God !

---

*ST. DYMPHNA.*

WITHIN the crowded fane she knelt,  
As if before God's throne :  
Nought heard, saw nought ; alone she felt :  
Alone with Christ alone.

Amid the desert knelt the maid ;  
Alone, yet not alone ;  
Praying with all that ever prayed  
Before the eternal Throne.

No wealth was hers in fields or flocks :  
The poor had all her gold :  
But honey gushed from the sunny rocks,  
And in milk the streamlet rolled.

O blissful maid, through light and shade  
So bright a path was thine ;  
Round hill and glade thy lustre played,  
And still o'er earth doth shine !

---

*MARTHA AND MARY.*

## I.

‘O SISTER ! leave you thus undone  
The bidding of the Lord ?  
Or call you this a welcome ? Run,  
And deck with me the board.’  
Thus Martha spake ; but spake to one  
Who answered not a word :  
For she kept ever singing,  
‘There is no joy so sweet  
As musing upon one we love ;  
And sitting at his feet !’

## II.

‘O Sister ! must my hands alone  
His board and bath prepare ?  
His eyes are on you ! raise your own :  
He’ll find a welcome there !’  
Thus spake again in loftier tone  
That Hebrew woman fair.  
But Mary still kept singing,  
‘There is no joy so sweet  
As musing upon him we love ;  
And resting at his feet !’

---

*HYMNS.*

## I.

‘The Earth is the Lord’s.’

## I.

LORD of the Lords of all the earth !  
Lord of the souls of men !  
From Thee all heavenly gifts have birth ;  
To Thee return again !

## II.

The lightnings flashed from off Thy throne  
Fill Heaven and Earth with light ;  
And by that living flame alone  
Men read the world aright.

## III.

On every crown and sceptre shed  
Thy beams of glory shine ;  
And burn round every Father’s head,  
That rules by right Divine.

## IV.

The Priests by thee anointed, stand  
Beside his altar, each ;  
And all the Wise, a Prophet-band,  
What Thou hast taught them teach.

## V.

Thy voice, O Father, rolls around  
The world for evermore ;  
The speech we know not but the sound  
In silence we adore.

## VI.

The Heavens themselves repose thereon :  
Thereon the Earth is stayed :  
And seasons change, and rivers run  
By Thee ordained and swayed.

## II.

## PEACE.

## I.

We lead a gentle life below :  
Our days, that seem to pass,  
Glide on and blend—before Thy throne  
Thus spreads the sea of glass.

## II.

One image fills that crystal sea ;  
One light o'er all doth shine :  
Yet every separate drop hath power  
That radiance to enshrine.

## III.

Nor less in unity and light  
True brethren, we abide ;  
' Like drops of Hermon's dew ' that still  
Into each other slide.

## IV.

Eternal glory, thanks and praise  
To Thee, O God, to Thee,  
Who buildest all the peace of men  
Upon that prime decree :

## V.

That he who loves the Lord his God  
Should hold all creatures dear ;  
And whoso fears his God, henceforth  
Should feel no baser fear.

## III.

## I.

‘ HE giveth His beloved sleep.’  
The haughty sow the wind :  
The storm they sow ; the tempest reap ;  
But rest they cannot find.

## II.

In sleep itself their furrowed brows,  
That care-worn mark retain ;  
Avenger of the guilt it shows,  
The curse and brand of Cain !

## III.

Rest is of God. He doth not sleep ;  
But while His children rest  
His hand outstretched and still doth keep  
O’er earth, their shadowed nest.

## IV.

His holy Angels chaunt around,  
To chase dark dreams away,  
That slumbers innocent and sound  
May leave serene the day.



## IV.

## I.

IN that cold cave with spices sweet  
When Christ, our Lord, lay dead,  
An Angel sat beside His feet,  
An Angel by His head.

## II.

All night their eyes to Heaven they raised  
Their wings around Him spread  
All day on those dark eyelids gazed  
But not a word they said.

## III.

And when the morn sabbatical  
Its Paschal light had spread,  
A chrysome robe o'er Earth's dark ball  
To Heaven those Angels sped.

## IV.

Keep, holy Angels, keep, O keep  
Such vigil by our bed :  
Calm visions from the urns of sleep,  
O'er us calm visions shed !

## V.

But when we wake to morning life  
And night's pure calm is fled  
Stay near us in our daily strife,  
Or we are worse than dead !

## V.

## I.

THE stars shine bright while earth is dark  
While all the woods are dumb  
How clear those far off silver chimes  
From tower and turret come !

## II.

Chilly but sweet the midnight air :  
And lo ! with every sound  
Down from the ivy-leaf a drop  
Falls glittering to the ground.

## III.

'Twas night when Christ was born on earth ;  
Night heard His faint, first cry ;  
While Angels carolled round the star  
Of the Epiphany.

## IV.

Alas ! and is our love too weak  
To meet Him on His way ?  
To pray for nations in their sleep ?  
For Love then let us pray !

## V.

Pray for the millions slumbering now :  
The sick, who cannot sleep :  
O may those sweet sounds waft them thoughts  
As peaceful, and as deep.

## VI.

Pray for the unholy and the vain :  
O may that pure-toned bell  
Disperse the Demon Powers of Air,  
And evil Dreams dispel !

## VII.

Pray for the aged, and the poor ;  
The crown-encompassed head ;  
The friends of youth, now far away ;  
The dying ; and the dead.

## VIII.

And ever let us wing our prayer  
With praise ; and ever say  
Glory to God Who makes the night  
Benignant as the day !

## VI.

## I.

A LOW sweet voice from out the brake  
Provoked a loud reply :  
Now half the birds are half awake ;  
They feel the morning nigh.

## II.

Fainting beneath her load of dreams  
The Moon inclines her brows,  
Expectant, towards those mightier beams  
That grant her toils repose.

## III.

Long streaks, the prophets of the Sun,  
    Illume the dusk, grey hill :  
But still the heart of Heaven is dun ;  
    The day is virgin still !

## IV.

O Christ ! ere yet beheld on earth  
    How oft, incarnate Word,  
Thy Prophets heralded Thy birth !  
    Alas, how seldom heard !

## V.

Rise, holy Brethren, rise, and sing  
    A prayer : and while we pray  
The morn shall fan with heavenly wing  
    Our lethargy away.

## VI.

Burst Thou, O God, these chains of flesh !  
    These languid eyes inspire :  
Our spirits make as morning fresh,  
    And pure as solar fire :

## VII.

And grant us, fronting thus the East,  
    When all the heavenly Powers  
Come forth to deck the bridal feast,  
    A place among Thy bowers !

## VIII.

Come, Lord and Master ! come and take  
    At last Thy ransomed home :  
Bid all Thy faithful dead awake ;  
    And may Thy Kingdom come !

## VII.

## CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE.

## I.

WITH virgin heart, undazzled eye,  
The Virgin-born went on  
Each snare surmounted or passed by,  
Until His task was done.

## II.

With bleeding feet but lifted head  
The waste of life He trod :  
Tinging, each step, with holy red  
The consecrated sod.

## III.

Those steps our earth doth yet retain :  
And when dark vapours hide  
That Sun which lights our pilgrim-train  
She too can be our guide.

## IV.

Father of Him and us ! Thy grace  
On us and all bestow  
Who seek the goal He sought, to trace  
His footmarks in the snow !

## V.

O joy to follow Him in hope  
For days, for months, for years :  
Our steps in turn o'er His to drop  
And o'er His blood our tears !

## VIII.

## TO THE HOLY SPIRIT.

## I.

THE wind rang out from depths of woods  
And pealed through valleys bent  
Among the echoing hills like tubes  
Of some vast instrument.  
Its sound we heard ; but know not whence  
It came, nor whither went.

## II.

The wind upon our forehead blows :  
In gleams of lambent flame  
The sunbeams flash from wave and leaf :  
The hour is now the same  
As when to Christ's anointed Twelve  
That promised Spirit came.

## III.

The sound as of a rushing wind  
Before His wings He flung :  
And leaped on those uplifted brows  
In many a flaming tongue !—  
O breathe on us Thy seven-fold powers :  
O dwell our hearts among !

## IV.

Live Thou in Christ's mysterious Vine  
Until her branches spread  
Among the stars—to them as flowers  
'Mid locks of one new-wed :  
And clasp in their descending arch  
The Earth's wide bridal-bed !

*HYMN.*

FOR THE FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS.

## I.

LET the Proto-martyr rest  
Earliest honoured of the dead ;  
John ! upon thy Saviour's breast  
Drop once more that saintly head !  
All the Church is met to-day  
Unto God to sing and pray ;  
Remembering those, the Babes, to whom was given  
First for their Lord to die and meet Him first in  
Heaven !

## II.

Yield the children readiest place !  
Tender parents, near them stand !  
From each mother's tearful face  
All that little awe-struck band  
Well may learn and aptly teach  
That God's electing love can reach,  
Winding untracked its own mysterious way  
Souls which have only learned to suffer and obey.

## III.

As from some Hesperian Isle  
Ravished rose-leaves loosely strewn  
Through a dark lake's dim defile  
When the morning breeze hath blown—  
Such were ye : so smooth the breath  
That snatched you, blushing, on to death.  
Mourn, Rachel, mourn no longer ! lest your sighs  
O'ertake those vernal souls soft journeying to the skies !

## IV.

Blessed infants timely caught  
From a mortal mother's breast,  
That wondering Angels might be taught  
What of earth is best !  
They with food of heavenly grain  
Meet your lips your strength sustain,  
And teach you words of heavenly lore, and keep  
A low and dulcet chaunt around you while you sleep.

## V.

Hark, I hear them as they bend  
O'er your cots, and gently sway them ;  
Angels' songs with ours they blend :  
Night or morn they never stay them.  
'Glory be to God,' they cry,  
'To, and from Eternity :  
To God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
All glory be from men, and from the Angel host.'

---

*HYMN.*

## THE MEEK.

'Blessed are the meek : for they shall inherit the earth.'

## I.

MEEK souls ! whose humble faith can prize  
Those heavenliest gifts of man,  
Obedience, and Self-sacrifice,  
Life's first, last, only plan  
By which we mount 'from grace to grace'  
Toward our celestial resting-place !



## II.

All hail ! the haughty from their towers  
Look down on you with scorn  
On you, scarce seen like meadow flowers  
Grass-hid, that perfume morn !  
Unmarked the while for them ye pray :  
Earth's salt that keeps her from decay.

## III.

Taught by the Church and by the Spirit  
Ye know that all things good  
Are yours, unsought ; that ye inherit  
By virtue of your blood  
Old Adam's blood in Christ made pure  
Whate'er is worthy to endure.

## IV.

Therefore while haughtier hands up-pile  
Their towers of sun-burned clay  
On yielding sand, volcanic isle,  
A brief and perilous stay ;  
Ye dwell in tents, removed at will :  
They fall ; yet safe their inmates still !

## V.

' What man shall reign ' No matter who !  
Alas ! we rave, and fret,  
We press, we struggle, we pursue ;  
For what ? for Power ! And yet  
On us submissive Angels wait,  
Pleased with their mild Diaconate.

## VI.

O place us on the lowliest ground  
That we, thus low, may see,  
Upreared above us, and around,  
Rank, Order, and Degree :  
'Terrace o'er terrace ranged on high  
To lure and rest the heavenward eye !

## VII.

All Earth is yours ; her mild increase ;  
Her lore through types laid bare ;  
Her generous toils ; her grateful ease ;  
Her duties ; and whate'er  
To nature, with a 'natural art'  
Freedom and heavenly peace impart.

## VIII.

Nature to docile hearts, and minds  
That sympathise with her  
In sunniest calms or dreariest winds  
Alike doth minister :  
Dark days her fasts the Fancy calls  
And bright her moving festivals.

## IX.

The soul uncumbered with a load  
Of self-dependent care  
Moves forth on equal plumes abroad,  
A Spirit of the air :  
Its own identity forsakes ;  
Its own all shapes of beauty makes.

## X.

How much that Genius boasts as hers  
And fancies hers alone,  
On you, meek Spirits, Faith confers !  
The proud have further gone  
Perhaps, through life's deep maze ; but you  
Alone possess the labyrinth's clue.

## XI.

To you the costliest spoils of Thought  
Wisdom, unclaimed, yields up ;  
To you her far-sought pearl is brought  
And melted in your cup.  
To you her nard and myrrh she brings  
Like orient gifts to infant kings.

## XII.

The 'single eye' alone can see  
All Truths around us thrown  
In their eternal unity :  
The humble ear alone  
Has power to grasp, and time to prize,  
The sweetness of life's harmonies.

## XIII.

Notions, to Thought made visible  
Are but the smallest part  
Of those immortal Truths, which dwell  
Self-radiant in man's heart.  
With outward beams are others bright ;  
But God has made you 'full of light.'

## XIV.

One science well ye know ; the Will  
Of God, to man laid bare :  
One art have mastered ; to fulfil  
The part assigned you there :  
If other, meaner lore ye sought,  
This first ye learned—to need it not !

## XV.

Empiric Laws, that hide the grace  
Of human life, as hard  
As iron mask upon a face  
From answering eyes debarred,  
Form but a lucid veil to you  
With all the Godhead shining through.

## XVI.

Yes, Angels prompt us, Spirits fence !  
But ye, a Father's hand  
Who trace through all His Providence,  
Discern that Angel-band ;  
'Tis yours alone their choirs to mark  
Descending to our precincts dark.

## XVII.

One half of all our cares and woes  
Exist but in our thought ;  
And lightly fall the rest on those  
With them who wrestle not.  
The feather scarcely feels that gale  
Which bursts the seaman's strongest sail.

## XVIII.

Yourselves not loving, room have ye  
For love of all your kind :  
And ye revere the mystery  
Of Love Divine enshrined  
In human ties that, day by day  
Some portion lose of mortal clay.

## XIX.

And dearer far become the names  
Of Father, Child, and Wife  
To those who feel their heavenly claims :  
And holier earthly Life  
To those who in that myriad mirror  
See thus their Lord undimmed by error.

## XX.

In Kings you see Him on His throne :  
In Priests before the shrine :  
In suffering men you hear Him groan :  
Thus life becomes divine ;  
Each shower with Fountal grace imbued,  
And Eucharistic all your food !

## XXI.

Your virtues shall not die with you  
Or those you leave behind,  
Destined each year to bloom anew,  
And ampler space to find  
For boughs o'er earth that spread and wave  
Though centered in your silent grave.

## XXII.

That Race ordained so long to be  
Sole witness here of God  
Formed but a single Family,  
Yea, scattered now abroad,  
Are still his seed whose marvelling eyes  
First saw them star-like in the skies !

## XXIII.

What, though the long-lived Patriarchs saw  
Their offspring as the sands !  
To those who see them not that Law  
Unchanged and changeless stands,  
That Law which honours in the dust  
The Souls that placed with God their trust.

## XXIV.

Even now in each fair infant's face  
The eye of Faith can see  
A mild and patriarchal grace  
A Regal dignity :  
He sits by future throngs half hid ;  
His throne that living pyramid !

## XXV.

Hail, noble Spirits, hail, O hail !  
While bleats the lamb or cooes the dove,  
Your gentle kind shall never fail,  
Nor earth wax faint in love.  
Hail, kings of peace : to you are given  
Flower-crowns on earth, star-crowns in Heaven !

*HYMN.*

FOR THE BUILDING OF A COTTAGE.

## I.

LAY foundations deep and strong  
On the rock, and not the sand—  
Morn her sacred beam has flung  
O'er our ancient land.  
And the children through the heather  
Beaming joy from frank bright eyes  
Dance along, and sing together  
Their loud ecstasies.  
Children, hallowed song to-day !  
Sing aloud ; but singing pray.  
Orphic measures proudly swelling  
Lifted cities in old time :  
Build we now a humbler dwelling  
With a humbler rhyme !  
Unless God the work sustain  
Our toils are vain and worse than vain.  
Better to roam for aye than rest  
Under the impious shadow of a roof unblest !

## II.

Mix the mortar o'er and o'er  
Holy music singing :  
Holy water o'er it pour  
Flowers and tresses flinging !  
Bless we now the earthen floor :  
May good Angels love it !

Bless we now the new-raised door  
And that cell above it !  
Holy cell, and holy shrine  
For the Maid and Child divine !  
Remember thou that see'st her bending  
O'er that babe upon her knee  
All Heaven is ever thus extending  
Its arms of love round thee !  
Such thought thy step make light and gay  
As yon elastic linden spray  
On the smooth air nimbly dancing,  
Thy spirits like the dew glittering thereon and  
glancing !

## III.

Castles stern in pride o'er-gazing  
Subject leagues of wolds and woods ;  
Palace fronts their fretwork raising  
'Mid luxurious solitudes !  
These, through clouds their heads uplifting,  
The lightning wrath of heaven invoke :  
His balance power is ever shifting ;  
The reed outlasts the oak.  
Live, thou cottage ! live and flourish  
Like a bank which mild dews nourish  
Bright with field flowers self-renewing,  
Annual violets, dateless clover ;  
Eyes of flesh thy beauty viewing  
With a glance may pass it over ;  
But to eyes that wiser are  
Thou glitterest like the morning star !  
O'er every heart thy beauty breathes  
Such sweets as morn shall waft from those new-  
planted wreaths !



## IV.

Our toils—not toils—are all but ended ;  
The day has wandered by :  
Her silver gleams the moon hath blended  
With the azure of the sky :  
Yet still the sunset lights are ranging  
On from mossy stem to stem ;  
Low winds their odours vague exchanging  
Chaunt day's requiem.  
Upon the diamonded panes  
The crimson falls with fainter stains :  
More high in heavenward aspiration  
The gables shoot their mystic lines :  
While now, supreme in grace as station  
The tower-like chimney shines.  
Beneath that tower an altar lies.  
Bring wood : light up the sacrifice !  
Now westward point the arched porch—  
Crown with a Cross the whole : our cot becomes  
a Church !

## V.

Strike once more a livelier measure  
Circling those fair walls again :  
Songs of triumph, songs of pleasure  
Well become you, gladsome train !  
Mark that shadowy roof ! each angle  
Angel heads and wings support :  
Those the woodbine soon must tangle  
These the rose shall court,  
And mingling closer hour by hour  
Enclose ere long a sabbath bower.

There shall the Father oft at even  
 Entone some ancient hymn or story  
 Till earth once more grows bright as heaven  
 With days of long past glory,  
 When Truth and Honour ranged abroad  
 To cleanse the world from Force and Fraud ;  
 When Zeal was humble ; Hope was strong :  
 And Virtue moved alone the angelic scourge of  
 Wrong !

## VI.

O happy days ! exhaustless dower  
 Of spotless joys and hours well spent  
 Renewed while moons their radiance shower  
 Upon the Acacia's silver tent,  
 Or airs of balmiest mornings thrill  
 And swell with renovated play  
 The breasts of children, childlike still  
 And innocent alway.  
 O'er them light flit our woes and jars  
 As shades o'er lilies, clouds o'er stars :  
 Even now my fancy hears the cooing  
 Of doves from well-known perch or croft ;  
 The bees even now the flowers are wooing  
 With sleepy murmur soft.  
 Glad home, from menial service pure !  
 Thee shall no foreign wants obscure :  
 Here all the ties are sacred ties :  
 And Love shines clear through all, and Truth  
 asks no disguise.

## VII.

Kings of the earth ! too frail, too small  
 This humble tenement for you ?

Then lo ! from Heaven my song shall call  
A statelier retinue !  
They come, the twilight ether cheering  
Not vain the suppliant song, not vain,  
Our earth on golden platform nearing,  
On us their crowns they rain !  
Like Gods they stand, the portal  
Lighting with looks immortal !  
Faith, on her chalice gazing deep :  
And Justice with uplifted scale :  
Meek Reverence ; pure, undreaming Sleep :  
Valour in diamond mail :  
There Hope with vernal wreath : hardby  
Indulgent Love ; keen Purity ;  
And Truth with radiant forehead bare :  
And Mirth, whose ringing laughter triumphs  
o'er Despair.

## VIII.

Breathe low ! stand mute in reverent trance !  
Those Potentates their mighty eyes  
Have fixed : Right well that piercing glance  
Roof, wall, and basement tries !  
Foundations few that gaze can meet :  
Therefore the Virtues bide with few :  
But where they once have fixed their seat  
Her home Heaven fixes too !  
They enter now with awful grace  
Their acceptable dwelling-place :  
In tones majestic yet tender  
They chaunt their consecration hymn  
From jewelled breasts a sacred splendour  
Heaving through shadows dim.

The rite is done : the seed is sown :  
Leave, each his offering, and be gone !  
Stay, ye for whom were raised these walls !  
Possession God hath ta'en : and now His guests  
He calls.

---

### *HYMN.*

FOR GOOD FRIDAY.

#### I.

O LAMB of God ! on Whom alone  
Earth's penal weight of sin was thrown,  
Have mercy, Saviour, on Thine own.  
For thou art Man. The Virgin gave  
To Thee her breast ; the earth a grave.  
If smiles, while Infant yet, on Thee  
Were found, Thy Mother knows, not we.  
A man, o'er Lazarus lulled asleep,  
With them that wept Thou too didst weep.  
Thy tears in dust of Salem sunk  
Ere yet her heart Thy blood had drunk.  
All griefs of mortals Thou hast known—  
Have mercy, Saviour, on Thine own.

#### II.

O Lamb of God, on Whom was laid  
That debt all worlds had never paid,  
Have mercy, Saviour ; hear and aid.  
For Thou art God. With God, behold,  
'Thou sat'st upon His throne of old :  
Dread throne surpassing depth and height,  
Eternal throne, and infinite !

Yet pity reached Thee there for man,  
Ere worlds were made, or pain began.  
With Abel bleeding Thou didst lie,  
With Isaac forth wast led to die,  
With Stephen stoned, and since, and yet,  
With all Thy Martyrs' blood art wet.

## III.

O Lamb of God, on Whom alone  
Earth's penal weight of sin was thrown,  
Have mercy, Saviour, on Thine own.  
Again the depths are stirred : we wait  
Before the shrine's forbidding gate,  
We stand in sable garments clad :  
The infant at the breast is sad.  
This day unconsecrated lies  
The Host : unblessed the Sacrifice !  
Tremble the altars disarrayed :  
The mighty temples are dismayed :  
Their chaunts are dead : nor lamp, nor light  
Save from the Sepulchres at night.

## IV.

O Lamb of God, on Whom was laid  
The debt all worlds had never paid,  
Have mercy, Saviour ; hear and aid.  
Again rings out that sound abhorred :  
Again, O widowed Church, the sword  
Pierces thy sacred heart—the cry  
Of ' Crucify Him, Crucify.'  
The Priest his garment rends again ;  
Once more blaspheme that perjured Twain ;  
Once more the upbraiding voice foretold  
Peals through dark shades from gardens cold.

—Prince of the Apostles ! ah that we,  
Like thee who fall, might weep like thee !

## V.

O Lamb of God, on Whom alone  
Earth's penal weight of sin was thrown,  
Have mercy, Saviour, on Thine own.

By each step along that road :  
By that Cross, Thine awful load :  
By the Hebrew women's wail :  
By the sponge, and lance, and nail :  
By Mary's martyrdom, when she  
In Thee died, yet offered Thee :  
By that mocking crowd accursed :  
By Thy dreadful, unquenched thirst :  
By Thy three hours' agony :  
And by that last unanswered cry—

## VI.

O Lamb of God, on Whom was laid  
The debt all worlds had never paid,  
Have mercy, Saviour, hear and aid.

Like shapes at God's last trump new-risen,  
My sins time-buried rise—and listen.  
The veil is rent ; the rocks are riven ;  
And demons sweep yon darkened heaven.  
Three crosses bar the black on high—  
That Thief beside Thee hung so nigh—  
How rolls he now on Thee his eye ;  
Nor sees beyond Thee hills or sky !  
Thus, Christ, we turn from all to Thee  
' Miserere Domine.'

*HYMN.*

## THE WASHING OF THE ALTAR ON GOOD FRIDAY.

## I.

Pour forth the wine-floods rich and dark  
Over the altar-stone :  
The time is short ; the yew-trees, hark,  
How mournfully they moan—  
It is the sacred blood of Christ  
By angels poured o'er earth ;  
While sable turns to amethyst  
And death to the new birth.

## II.

O'er all the altar pour the wine  
With joyful strength amain ;  
The streams alone from God's great vine  
Can clear that altar's stain—  
It is the Saviour's wondrous blood :—  
The ensanguined planet now  
Ascends from this baptismal flood  
As bright as Christ's own brow.

## III.

The flood that cleanses on and in  
Roll, sacred brethren, roll ;  
But Thou whose suffering purged our sin,  
O wash each sinful soul !  
It is the atoning blood of Him  
By Whom all worlds are shriven :  
Who lights with love our midnight dim  
And changes earth to Heaven.

*MAUNDY THURSDAY.*

## THE WASHING OF THE FEET.

ONCE more the Temple-Gates lie open wide :  
Onward, once more  
Advance the Faithful, mounting like a tide  
That climbs the shore.

Naked as tombs the Altars stand to-day :  
The shrines are bare :  
Christ of His raiment was despoiled ; and they  
His livery wear.

This day the mighty and the proud have heard  
His 'Mandate New ;'  
That which He did, their Master, and their Lord  
This day they do.

This day the mitred foreheads, and the crowned  
In meekness bend :  
New tasks this day the sceptred hands have found :  
The Poor they tend.

To-day those feet which tread in lowliest ways  
Yet follow Christ  
Are by the secular lords of power and praise  
Both washed and kissed.

Hail Ordinance sage of hoar antiquity  
Which she retains  
That Church who teaches man how meek should be  
The head that reigns.



*SELF-SACRIFICE.*

## I.

WHEN Christ let fall that sanguine shower  
Amid the garden dew  
O say what amaranthine flower  
In that red rain up grew ?  
If yet below, the blossom grow  
Then earth is holy yet :  
But if it bloom forgotten, woe  
To those who dare forget !

## II.

No flower so precious, sweet, and lone  
Expands beneath the skies :  
In Eden bowers it lurked unblown—  
Its name ? Self-sacrifice !  
The very name we scarce can frame,  
And yet that secret root  
The monsters of the wild might tame,  
And Heaven is in the fruit !

## III.

Alas ! what murmur spreads around ?  
'The news thereof hath been :  
But never yet the man was found  
Whose eye that flower hath seen.'  
Then nobles all ! leave court and hall  
And search the wide world o'er ;  
For whoso finds this Sancgreall  
Stands crowned for evermore !

*THE CREATION OF MAN.*

## A RABBINICAL TRADITION.

WHEN but the first page of the Book of Fate  
As yet lay open—thus the Seers relate—  
When through the new-born woods the lion ran  
The pard, but eyed not yet their master, Man ;  
When blindly worked through clay the thing that  
    creeps ;  
When hung, amazed, the eagle o'er the deeps ;  
The great Creator, bending from the shore  
Of heaven, awhile His six days' work forbore :  
He willed not that like beast or bird should rise  
That Race whose forehead parleys with the skies ;  
That even man's earthly garb should take its mould  
Save from Himself, the Eternal One of Old.  
Ere yet His ' hour was come,' the All-Wise, All-Good  
In human form, then first Incarnate, stood :  
Behind Him sank the sun o'er pastures golden ;  
    Man-shaped before Him stretched His sacred  
    shade ;  
He stood, He spake with sceptred hand high-holden ;  
    'Rise, Man, from earth in God's own Image made :'  
And where that shadow on the sward was stayed  
Forth from his native dust ascending, Man obeyed.

---

*AN ANCIENT LEGEND, AND ITS ANSWER.*

[‘Through Alexandria there rushed of old, a Woman with disordered garb that held high in one hand a Torch, and in the other bore a Jar of Water, and cried aloud, saying, “With this Torch I will burn up Heaven, and with this Jar of Water I will quench Hell, that henceforward God may be loved for His own sake alone.”’]

THOU Christian Mænad, with thy Torch and Jar  
That wouldst burn Heaven to its remotest star  
And quench all Hell, that thus, beneath—above—  
God might be God alone, and Love but Love,  
Too proud for gifts! dash down that Jar and Torch,  
And learn a lowlier wisdom from the Church.  
Know this, that God is Heaven: with Him who dwell  
Find Love’s Reward perforce: and theirs is Hell,  
Hate’s dread self-prison, who pine in endless night  
From God self-exiled; haters of the light.  
Mænad! Thy Thyrsus is no Prophet Rod:  
Who cancels Heaven and Hell must cancel God.

---

*TRIAL.*

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

As when for weeks the tempest blinds  
Some sea-girt mountain, night and day,  
So storms of trial, clouds and winds  
Besieged his soul till not a ray  
Could reach him of that glory streamed  
From God upon the new-born world:  
An erring star and lost he seemed  
Through endless darkness onward hurled.

At last, his large heart breaking, down  
He knelt his latest prayer to make,  
True heart that, shrivelling in the frown  
Of God, that God would not forsake,

‘If I must lose Thee there beneath,  
Lord, let me love Thee till I die!’—  
It sank—the black cloud’s latest wreath;  
And God was his eternally!

---

## Sonnets.

*GOD'S GIFTS.*

## I.

LOVE to the tender ; peace to those who mourn ;  
Hope to the hopeless, hope that does not fail,  
Whose symbol is the anchor, not the sail ;  
Glory that spreads to Heaven's remotest bourn  
And to its centre doth again return  
Like music ; health revisiting the frail ;  
Freedom to those who pine in dungeons pale ;  
Sorrows which God hath willed and Christ hath worn !  
Omnipotence to be the poor man's shield ;  
Light, uncreated light, to cheer the blind ;  
Infinite mercy sent to heal and bind  
All wounds encountered in life's well-fought field ;  
These are God's gifts to man ;—nor these alone :  
Himself He gives to all who make those gifts their  
own.

---

*LAW AND GRACE.*

## II.

YES, I remember : once beneath a yoke  
We walked, with jealous pride and painful fear :

Then a stern footstep sounded ever near ;  
And, when that Presence dread His silence broke,  
Austere and cold as if a statue spoke,  
Each marble sentence smote upon my ear ;  
Yet 'Thou shalt not' was all that I could hear—  
Then sudden from its trance my spirit woke.  
The sun was rising. Floods of light divine,  
Golden, and crimson on the mountains played.  
I saw the village spire like silver shine :  
Eolian music filled the echoing shade :  
And I could hear, through all the murmuring glen,  
Music of moving Gods come down to live with men.

---

### *CHURCHES.*

#### III.

A CASTLE strongly built, and eminent  
Above Time's battle-plain defaced and gory ;  
A palace where, in robes of kingly glory  
Our spirits rest ; among parched sands a tent ;  
One sunlit isle in a vexed element ;  
A gallery graced with all the pictured story  
Of earth and man ; a high observatory  
Whence eyes of seers for aye on Heaven are bent :—  
Such is yon Church : and round its tapering spire  
I see, descending like a heavenly crown  
Immortal forms a wreathed and beautiful choir  
Bearing in golden urns and baskets down  
Angelic food ; and scattering with the sound  
Of hymns and chaunted psalms those demons hovering  
round !

## IV.

YE praise the humble : of the meek ye say  
‘Happy they live among their lowly bowers ;  
The mountains, and the mountain-storms are ours !’  
Thus, self-deceivers, filled with pride alway,  
Reluctant homage to the good ye pay,  
Mingled with scorn like poison sucked from flowers—  
Revere the humble ! godlike are their powers :  
No mendicants for praise of men are they.  
The child who prays in faith ‘Thy will be done’  
Is blended with that Will Supreme which moves  
A wilderness of worlds by Thought untrod ;  
He shares the starry sceptre, and the throne :  
The man who as himself his neighbour loves  
Looks down on all things with the eyes of God !

---

## V.

THAT depth of love the Church doth bear to thee  
Thou knowest not yet ; for thou not yet hast felt  
The beatings of an infant’s bosom melt  
Into thine own ; and all that mystery  
Whereby, nought-seeing—caring not to see—  
The creature, instinct-taught, its food doth draw  
By a sweet pressure and benignant law  
Forth from its mother’s breast perpetually.  
But, by the blessings of thy future hearth,  
By all its order, sanctity, and peace,  
Resist not Her whose meek and tearful eyes  
Followed the wanderer ever from Her birth ;  
Whose shadow charmed thy sleep ; whose litanies  
Soft as Spring’s breath woke first thy soul’s increase !

*THE VASTNESS OF DIVINE TRUTH  
LOST IN ITS SIMPLICITY.*

VI.

FROM end to end we glance ; from Adam's fall  
To Christ's triumphant death and victory,  
At once—those mysteries that between them be  
By man are known but scantily, if at all :  
And thus in time our marvel waxes small ;  
Thus gazing down into an air-like sea  
Its depth eludes us from its purity,  
And treasures ours so cheaply vainly call  
For gratitude or gladness. On we go  
Unmoved beneath a heaven of awe-struck eyes ;  
While purer beings, Angel minds that know  
The cost of that great boon which we despise  
Look down on us, suspended from their skies,  
With deeper awe than men on God bestow.

---

*EVIDENCES OF RELIGION.*

VII.

1.

LETTERS there be too large for us to read :  
Words shouted mock the sense, and beat the air :  
Emblazon not in such a type thy creed :  
Through such a trumpet peal not thou thy prayer.  
Truth has her *Saxon friends*, of whom beware :  
No alien help, or haughty, doth she need :  
To him who seeks her, pure in heart and deed  
Her pledges and her proofs are everywhere.



Whate'er we hear or see ; whate'er doth lie  
Round us in Nature ; all that human thought  
In Science, or in Art, hath found, or wrought,  
Stand fixed as notes on Truth's immortal book.  
What need we more ? a Commentary ? look  
Through all the mighty roll of History !

---

*EVIDENCES OF RELIGION.*

VIII.

2.

YE who would build the Churches of the Lord !  
\* See that ye make the western portals low :  
Let no one enter who disdains to bow.  
High Truths profanely gazed at, unadored,  
Will be abused at first, at last abhorred ;  
And many a learned, many a lofty brow  
Hath rested, pillowed on a humbler vow  
Than critic ken can notice or record.  
O stainless peace of blest Humility !  
Of all who fain would enter, few, alas !  
Catch the true meaning of that kind, sad eye ;  
While thou, God's portress, stationed by His door,  
Dost stretch thy cross so near the marble floor  
That children only, without bending, pass.

\* An ancient custom.

---

*SIMPLICITY AND STEADFASTNESS  
OF MIND.*

IX.

WHEN plain and city, garden, mount and wood  
Under the Flood's blank tablet lay unseen  
Three objects only met thy vision keen  
Angel of Earth ! in that wild solitude ;  
The Sun ; that shining and unshadowed flood :  
And, heaven-ward lifted on its tide serene,  
The Ark, sole-drifting where a world had been—  
No meaner image lured thine eye from God.  
Our eyes are full of idols : O ! that we  
From those soul-murdering gewgaws of the day  
Might turn, and fix our gaze immovably  
Upon God's Church, tracking its marvellous way  
Over the ocean of God's awful Love—  
And Him, that steadfast Sun which lights her from  
above.

---

*THE PENITENT.*

X.

FROM grave to grave I pace inwardly sighing  
'Is not this place for my repentance meet ?'  
Borne through dark boughs the night-winds unreplying  
The unanswered question mournfully repeat.  
To you I turn, under the damp grass lying,  
O Friends ; and pray you from your dusk retreat  
To breathe a spirit of sorrow holy and sweet  
Over this heart dried up, in silence dying.

And thou, in Palestine's cold shadows sleeping  
'Mid dust with tears of thine so often blent  
Give me one gush of thy perpetual weeping,  
Holy Saint Mary, ever penitent !  
Night after night fresh dewes revive the flowers :  
Ah ! that one Baptism should alone be ours !

---

*SPIRITUAL RETREATS.*

(PENITENTIAL 1.)

XI.

BATHS of the Church ! seclusions sad, yet dear !  
Amid your cloistral caves, and shadowy cells,  
That dark-stoled hermitress, Repentance, dwells,  
Haunting your loneliest shades with patient cheer ;  
And agitating oft with hallowing tear  
The streams Bethesdal of your healing wells ;  
Or murmuring low her grief-taught oracles  
For souls too weak to feel, too proud to hear.  
' Alas ! world-wearied Spirits, fly no more !  
These springs make strong the feeble knees : these  
    dews  
Efface the lines of lingering care ; infuse  
Immortal youth through bosoms of threescore :—  
Draw near. The Angels shall your introit sing,  
Fanning your weary foreheads with assuasive wing.

---

*DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH.*

(PENITENTIAL 2.)

## XII.

Too much of mirth—too many smiles—depart  
Vain phantoms of the Sense, false baits of sin !  
One hour for holy mourning who may win  
Amid the clamour of the world's loud mart ?  
A sigh throws wide the portals of the heart :  
Pure Spirits enter : good resolves begin :  
How wholesome then that care, how kind that art  
The highways of man's life o'ershadowing  
With cypress thickets at wide intervals,  
And gardens bowered 'mong cedar-darkened rifts  
Hollowed with dewy vaults, and silent halls ;  
Where smooth once more the soul her forehead lifts  
And pleurably spreads a widening eye  
Shrunk up too long and dimmed by the sun's tyranny !

---

*PENITENTIAL SEASONS.*

## XIII.

' LARGE as the beads of this dark rosary  
Was each successive drop that slowly fell  
Down from the Saviour's temples, audible  
To the earth's beating heart. O misery !  
I had forgotten them ! forget not me,  
Thou merciful Redeemer. Like a knell  
My sinful Past salutes me ! Let me dwell  
Henceforth in that sad garden, Lord, with Thee.'

Even thus the Holy Church with lifted palms  
On her wet eyelids pressed and forehead pale  
Depressed beneath a dusk, funereal veil  
Chaunteth all night her penitential psalms :  
Nor from her mournful litanies can cease  
Until the sun shall rise and give her peace.

---

*ON A PICTURE OF THE MAGDALENE.*

XIV.

WEEPER perpetual, of whom men say  
Not that she lived so long, 'but so long wept ;'  
And in her fond imagination crept  
Fearful, yet fond, to those blest feet each day :  
There knelt to wash them : there to wipe them lay :  
There in her shining locks caught them and kept :  
And hallowed thus, a tender love-adept,  
Thenceforth those glittering tresses never grey !—  
Fulfilled Thy Master's word hath been ! Where'er  
Thy Lord is preached art thou remembered, making  
Repentance to sad hearts dear, and yet dearer.  
Thine eyes like heavens by midnight rains left clearer,  
How oft we see thee thus through deserts bare,  
Thy sad yet solaced way in silence taking !

---

*DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH.*

(COMMEMORATIVE.)

## XV.

WITH solemn forms, benign solitudes,  
But each a Sacramental type and pledge  
Of Grace, the Church inweaves a sheltering hedge  
Around her garden vale in the wild woods ;  
Giving Heaven's calm to Nature's varying moods.  
She plants a cross on every pine-girt ledge :  
A chancel by each river's liliated edge.  
Where'er her Catholic dominion broods,  
Behold how two Infinitudes are mated,  
The Mighty and Minute by the control  
Of Love or Duty linked with care sublime !  
On earth no spot, no fleeting point of time,  
Within our mind no thought, within our soul  
No feeling, doth she leave unconsecrated.

---

*NATURAL RELIGION.*

## XVI.

SEARCH ye the Heart of man until ye find  
That which is deepest. Raise your eyes again  
Up through the loftiest region of his Mind :  
And in each spacious, and serene domain  
The same calm Presence ye shall mark enshrined :  
The Thought of God—For pleasure, or for pain  
It fills the one great soul of all our kind :  
And Conscience to her breast this Truth doth strain.

Away with blind, empiric argument  
To 'stablish that which is the ultimate,  
The ground, o'er which all other notions pass !  
Man may distort God's Image, not create—  
We dim too closely o'er the semblance bent,  
With our own breath pure Reason's mystic glass.

---

*INTERIOR EVIDENCES.*

## XVII.

It was not with your gold, nor with your merit  
You bought that peace celestial now your own.  
You did not those heart-quickenings hopes inherit  
Like youthful princes born to grace a throne.  
These are the fruits of that eternal Spirit,  
Who showers His grace on Faith, and Faith alone :  
Whose yoke but steadies those that gently bear it,  
Whose Presence can but through His Gifts be shown.  
These are the proofs, th' assurance which you thought  
That you were seeking ; while, intent to shun  
Truth's living Lord, yourself alone you sought :  
Now you have found yourself in Him, and won  
The bloodless triumphs of the fields He fought :  
The rest your own right hand must teach—Ride on !

---

*CONVERSION.*

## XVIII.

LOUD as that trumpet doomed to raise the dead  
God's voice doth sometimes fall on us in fear,

More often with a music low yet clear  
Low whispering, 'It is I: be not afraid.'  
And sometimes, mingling strangely joy with dread,  
It thrills the spirit's caverned sepulchre  
Deep as that voice which on the awe-struck ear  
Of him, the three-days-buried, murmuring, said  
'Come forth'—and he arose. O Christians, hail  
As brethren all on whom our glorious Sun  
At morn, or noon, or latest eve, hath shone  
With light, and life: and neither mourn nor rail  
Because one light, itself unchanging, showers  
A thousand colours on a thousand flowers.

---

*THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.*

XIX.

How many precious influences meet  
In this frail flower, the orphan of the year!  
To her the Sun, her little span to cheer,  
Sends down two momentary heralds, heat  
And light, and pours his tribute at her feet:  
Yea, every atom of earth's solid sphere  
Shoots forth attractions that concentrate here  
And in this lowly creature's pulses beat.  
Then wherefore fear that any human soul  
Small though it be, is worthless in His sight  
Whose Mercy, like His Power, is infinite?  
Why doubt that God's eternal Love can reach  
At once the vital soul of all and each;  
And one vast Sympathy inspire the whole?



*NATURE AND GRACE.*

## XX.

THAT Light which is the Life alone can give  
The living Power which makes us love the Light :  
Love it in Faith, and with the Godlike might  
Of Love, to Love's one object cling and cleave :  
But we can only have what we receive.  
By conscience taught man's eye discerns the Right ;  
But this we lack—the strength to scale its height  
That we with it might dwell, and in it live.  
Science and Song, their constellated wings  
Waving from Eastern unto Western skies,  
Soar but to sink. Not any bird that flies  
Mounts straight ascending—Grace, and Grace alone  
Shoots heavenward, as from yonder altar-stone  
The sacrificial flame triumphant springs !

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# SONNETS

BY THE LATE

HON. STEPHEN E. SPRING RICE.\*

\* I have been again permitted to enrich this volume with a series of sonnets by the late Stephen E. Spring Rice. To those who knew him the beauty of many will be no surprise, though they lacked his last corrections. Friends less intimate will be pleased at discovering how compatible are poetic power, imaginative emotion, and refined thought, with habits of business, and the most ardent practical energies directed to their most generous and dutiful ends.

1861.



## I.

WITH slow and thoughtful step I went my way  
Through new-mown meadows, crowded pastures  
green,

On the 'Hawk's Cliff,' in thickets deep, unseen,  
Without a friend to pass the summer's day.

\* I read of murdered Strafford as I lay,  
Of timid, faithless Charles, of Pym serene  
Though mourning for the friend whose youth had  
been

Brightened, like his, with Freedom's purest ray.  
Did Friendship earn from Charles no better fate?

Could not strong Friendship something then avail,  
And Justice from her claims on Pym abate?

—Then rather let me listen to the gale  
Ruffling the sunlit foliage, and create  
A world of friends unseen than trust to those who  
fail.

CURRAGH CHASE, *August 17, 1837.*

---

## *THE BLACK TARN UNDER MANGERTON.*

## II.

WITH quicker coming breath and shorter stride  
We reached at length the level, purple height  
Which seemed from far unto our straining sight

\* Browning's Drama.

The crown of that calm monarch's silent pride ;  
But, when we paused, we heard a petty tide  
    Hoarse, low, monotonous ; and, dark as night,  
    A sullen lake lay shadowed by the might  
Of rugged cliffs that bound its further side.  
How fit an emblem of the mind whose share  
    Of life is solitude and selfish thought  
Gloomy, and murmuring on a barren strand !  
Mine be a bay by eager breezes fanned,  
    And not by tempest into anger wrought  
Though Ocean's pulse is ever throbbing there !

*January 22, 1838.*

### *EARLY FRIENDSHIP.*

#### III.

THE half-seen memories of childish days  
    When pains and pleasures lightly came, and went ;  
    The sympathies of boyhood rashly spent  
In fearful wanderings through forbidden ways ;  
The vague, but manly, wish to tread the maze  
    Of life to noble ends : whereon intent,  
    Asking to know for what man here is sent,  
The bravest heart must often pause, and gaze—  
The firm resolve to seek the chosen end  
    Of manhood's judgment, cautious and mature :  
Each of these viewless bonds binds friend to friend  
    With strength no selfish purpose can secure ;—  
My happy lot is this, that all attend  
    That friendship which first came, and which shall  
    last endure.

*DRUDGERY.*

## IV.

PLEASANT it is, at close of weary day,  
When all is out of sight that vexed the mind  
To dull routine or petty task confined,—  
Pleasant with intermitting chat to say  
‘This easy converse fully doth repay  
The morning’s labour.’ Search! and you shall find  
That only toil upon some work assigned  
Can fit foundation for such leisure lay.  
My friends are gone; these things I think and feel,  
As o’er the dewy grass a path I make:  
Some distant waggon with its labouring wheel  
Betrays the silence which it seems to break;  
Slow, heavy perfumes o’er the garden steal;  
The flickering branches in the moonbeam shake.

---

*TITIAN’S PICTURE OF BACCHUS AND  
ARIADNE.*

## V.

YOUNG Ariadne, by her lover led  
Through narrow mountain pass, or woodland glade  
Rich with a thousand flowers, loved the shade  
That o’er her modest steps a veil outspread:  
Now, with slow tears she mourns that lover fled:  
Her golden hair, half fallen from the braid,  
Hath but a wavering protection made  
For the fair brow; and from her glossy head

The sunbeams glance. Alone she walks the shore ;—  
When suddenly is thronged that barren place,  
And youthful Bacchus, like a bursting wave  
Leaps from his panther car with headlong grace.  
—And will his godlike raptures please her more  
Than calmer joys her mortal lover gave ?

*August 20, 1843.*

---

*MARY SAYING HER PRAYERS.*

VI.

I.

WILFUL and dull and sullen seems that child ;  
But who in that soft countenance can find  
An index to the thoughts that fret her mind ?  
By no long-cherished hope was she beguiled ?  
Has no uncertain vision gleamed and smiled,  
Then faded from her eyelids ? Had the wind,  
Circling the world, no messages consigned  
To her young heart this morning sweet and mild,  
When with the dawn it touched upon her brow ?  
By recollections flickering, undefined,  
Perhaps she may be haunted even now ;  
By dim and shapeless aspirations vexed,  
With infantile experiences entwined ;  
By half-seen truths surprised, alarmed, perplexed

*August 15, 1846.*

---



## VII.

## 2.

SLOW serious phrases, tender words and few  
The mother whispered in a voice subdued,  
Gently submitting to the wayward mood  
Which from her loving watchfulness she knew  
Would fade away, and by observance due  
Be soon succeeded ; no abrupt or rude  
Commandment was she forward to intrude ;  
The instinct of affection, ever true  
To loftiest conceptions of the mind,  
Prompted such patience and respect for those  
Who tho' on earth and to our care consigned  
Are yet angelic. Seeing them, she knows  
What loveliness might shine in humankind  
If still unstained by sin, unworn by woes.

*August 28, 1846.*

---

*OLD AND MODERN LEARNING.*

## VIII.

THE learning of old times was as a stream  
Through many an untrod glen that held its way,  
Smooth-flowing, clear, and silent as a dream  
To the calm precincts of a cloister grey ;  
In which the sculptured fount would doubtless seem  
A Station fit, where holy men each day  
Might read the gracious Word, and muse, and pray,  
' Send us the living water, Lord Supreme ! '

The learning of these days doth rush along  
By humblest hut and proudest palace bowers,  
Like a broad torrent, troubled, loud, and strong;  
Each sloping bank, throughout the circling hours,  
Is crowded by an eager, restless throng—  
They crush to dust the few remaining flowers.

---

## IX.

Love is historic ; rests upon the past ;  
Still lingers lovingly on old detail ;  
Still, like the holy bells, rings out a tale  
For ever new, from earliest to last :  
Love is prophetic ; climbing still the mast  
Discerns of distant hope the signal pale,  
And on the straining spar extends the sail  
Withheld by colder counsels from the blast.  
Mysterious delight in what is lost !  
Wild half fruition of what may be won  
By struggling perseverance, tempest-toss'd !  
Yet love in silence wrapt and deep repose,  
Whilst one short hour its hasty course can run,  
May find more joy than many a lifetime knows !

---

## X.

THINK not man's fallen nature can accept,  
Or, if accepting, value at their worth  
Rites that lack splendour ; slave of grief or mirth  
By fleshly lusts he is in bondage kept.

Far less believe that splendid rites give birth  
To heartfelt sorrow, such as his, who ' wept  
And smote upon his breast,' for this man steep  
With downcast eyes, not heeding aught on earth.  
Man must employ in worship every power,  
Will, reason, understanding, heart, and sense ;  
And should he on some dull or fond pretence  
Neglect but one, then from devotion's flower  
He cuts a leaf that drank the heavenly dew,  
Or root, that purity from baseness drew.

---

## XI.

If, task'd beyond my strength, I crave delay  
And weakly wish that to another hand  
Had been committed what divine command  
Has sent to mine ; if on th' appointed way  
I pause, and, thoughtless of my purpose, stray ;  
If, wearied with the men, the clime, the land  
Which I call mine, I seek another strand,  
That on the wings of chance I lightly may  
Outstrip the homely cares which day by day  
Hum in my ears ; if by myself I stand  
Accused of all these faults, and cannot say  
That I less subject am unto their sway  
Now than of old—you needs must understand  
How rashly upon me new duties would you lay.

---

## XII.

SOFT sighing wind that comest to dispel  
The rigid bond that holds the buds so long  
As almost to provoke a sense of wrong  
In those who now have sadly watched them swell  
Slowly, for weeks ; O, would that I could tell  
How deep the joy thou bringest, and how strong !  
O that I too could blossom into song,  
And hail thee loosen'd from thy southern cell  
Whilst all surrounding Nature seems to smile  
And bare her breast at thy sunbright approach !  
O, wherefore hast thou tarried so long while ?  
Dear spirit ! tenderly must I reproach  
Thee, dallying upon the Italian shore  
Or launching thence across the purple, smooth sea  
floor.

---

## XIII.

No sweeter pleasure can this life supply  
Than what my darling children daily bring  
To me, well wearied of that noisy thing  
We call society : without a sigh—  
Nay, gladly—I would cast ambition by,  
Content to hear their eager questioning  
(The chirping of young birds that cannot sing),  
To weigh for them the words of my reply,  
And righteously instruct them—I should rest  
Like the worn ship in harbour there below,

Which, safe from struggling on the Ocean's breast,  
Floats in the silent water—what a glow

The setting sun casts on her tricolor crest !  
She hears far off waves toss and tempests blow.

JARDIN MARENGO, ALGIERS :

*January 28, 1855.*

---

*SYMPATHY DISPENSED WITH.*

XIV.

AND if indeed I wear my soul away,  
And pour my heart out upon barren stones,  
And vainly try to vivify dead bones,  
And through dry deserts hunt a worthless prey ;  
If, disappointed, thus from men I stray,  
And strive to find a meaning in the tones,  
The half-heard whispers and the sullen moans,  
In which unfeeling Nature seems to say,  
But says most falsely, that in her doth dwell  
A sympathetic beating of the heart,  
Should then myself against myself rebel,  
And dream of a self-centred life apart,  
Myself shall blame myself : all may be well :  
Love, without self-love soothes the bitterest smart.

*February 8, 1857.*

---

*THE HEART KNOWETH ITS OWN  
BITTERNESS.*

XV.

WE sat together underneath a lime,  
Whose netted branches wove an emerald night ;  
And in short sentences—in low and light  
Whispers—recalled the stories of old time :  
Until some word, I know not what, some rhyme  
Dragged out a hidden grief, that lived—in spite  
Of creeping lichen years—such years as might  
Well humble all that once was thought sublime.  
*My* grief it was, and will be : *she* but sees  
A strangeness which she cannot understand ;  
A nameless tower overgrown with trees ;  
A heap of stones encumbering the land ;  
A hearth now haunted by the wintry breeze,  
Long, long ago, by love and fancy fanned.

*January 19, 1858.*

---

XVI.

‘THE spacious Shenan, spreading like a sea,’  
Lies far below, beyond the lawn and wood,  
That, tender green, this, rich in purple bud ;  
And, hidden from the sight by bush and tree,  
I hear a tinkling streamlet fall and flee  
Through the deep glen to seek that distant flood ;  
Soft airs escape from the hill-side and scud,  
With gentle touches, bird-like, wild, and free,

Across that glassy bosom. All is peace.

Would that with me such calm might ever dwell !  
That I might live content, nor seek release  
From cares appointed ; never feel the swell  
Of vague ambition ; dream of no increase  
In wealth or power ; well loved, and loving well !

MOUNT TRENCHARD : *April* 6, 1860.

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*SICK DREAMS ALL.*

XVII.

WRITTEN IN SICKNESS.

THE spirit worn with sickness walks thro' vales  
Of shadowy meaning, elbowed by a flow  
And ceaseless throng of ghastly forms, that show  
Some fleeting token, which, tho' light, assails  
The memory, and rends aside its veils ;  
Or through some ebon vault, set deep below,  
With outstretched hands and stumbling step and  
slow,  
The sick man's fancy wanders ; or he sails  
Upon a smooth broad sea ; some unseen hand  
Directs the helm and gives a steady run ;  
His languid eye perceives no distant land ;  
He knows not of his journey ; if begun  
But now, or ending, cannot understand ;  
But sails toward a drooping blood-red sun.

*April* 1861.

---

*THE DREAM OF A LIFE.*

## XVIII.

WRITTEN IN SICKNESS.

I WANDER in a thick-set wood alone—  
Tall, naked boles of trees around me crowd,  
And overhead their branches weave a shroud  
For the dead earth : ever I hear the moan  
Of the sharp winter wind, or else the groan  
Of some old tree that in past tempests bowed  
And shaken to the root betrays aloud  
Its coming fall. I find no friendly stone  
That measures distance in this dreary wild ;  
No path is obvious to my drooping eyes ;  
Days, weeks, and years have gone since on me smiled  
Unbroken light above ; I sit, and rise ;  
Lie down or wander aimless : hope is gone ;  
Escape from this dark forest there is none.

*June 1861.*

---

*‘ HOLD UP, OLD HORSE ! ’*

## XIX.

THE exile pacing o’er the Russian plain  
To that far East where he must waste his life,  
Exhausted with the long and passionate strife  
Whose failure earned this fate, can not retain  
Or fix the thoughts which flit across his brain ;  
His memory with formless clouds is rife,



Of youth and home—of children and of wife—  
Lost in a haze of dull and leaden pain :

So I, ere half my day is spent, outworn,  
And stepping surely towards an early end,  
But dimly see the promise of my morn,  
Though far unlike that wretched one forlorn ;—  
Lovers and friends my failing steps attend ;  
And I can welcome all that God may send.

*March 4, 1864.*

---

*SPRING.*

XX.

LONG wished-for, bursts in gladness the new year,  
Sweetness and beauty freely sheds around,  
And hides anew the sullen withered ground  
With tender verdure, whilst from far and near  
The song of birds crowds thick upon the ear,  
Perplexing sense with multitudinous sound ;  
No jealous laws are felt that tie and bound  
The bounteousness of Nature, no sad fear  
Of late born frosts her genial step delays :  
As friend to friend his hoarded thought betrays,  
Long chilled and frozen by the mastering need  
Of sympathy, and finds both that and praise,  
So spring is welcome in each flower and weed,  
Lavish in love, and fearless in her ways.

*May 12, 1864.*

---

*TO LINA.*

## XXI.

THE night is soft as under southern skies ;  
The garden is deserted, save by me ;  
Whilst ever and anon a gleam I see  
Flash from the house, perplexing my old eyes ;  
For one short moment on the lawn it lies,  
Then into ghostly being brings a tree  
Unseen before—the murmur of the sea  
Steals through the branches. But a glad surprise  
Absorbs all these delights, and gives its own ;  
From the sweet south leaps out a gracious wind,  
Fresh, strong, and soothing, stirring in the mind  
Old thoughts and new, by its elastic tone ;—  
Such and so sudden was, on seeing you,  
My joy to-day ; ah ! moments dear and few !

*August 4, 1864.*

---

*LEFT ALONE.*

## XXII.

THE sea-gulls glancing o'er the glittering wave  
Are now my sole companions : and indeed,  
When questioned, I replied I had no need  
Of others. Vain my boast ! ah ! vainly brave  
From past experience, when warm pulses gave  
An inner strength that either took no heed  
Of outward circumstance, or let it lead  
By seeming chance to thoughts or gay or grave.

But now a leaden heart has lost its spring  
And must renew its impulse from without.  
Whenso my darling children crowd about,  
And their swift thoughts wheel by upon the wing,  
Strong in their strength, I follow in their flight :  
One after one they pass ; and then comes dreary  
night.

GIBRALTAR BAY, ON BOARD THE 'SIDON':  
*November 25, 1864.*

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## EDIFICATION.

### XXIII.

ON THE BAPTISM OF AN INFANT IN ST. PETER'S.

If this vast building had been reared for nought  
But as a temple where this solemn rite  
Might be completed, still the hands that wrought  
Its stately walls, the intellectual might  
Of its great architect, the wealth that brought  
Art's choicest treasures had been used aright,  
Clothing with fitting dignity the thought  
That on man's heart God's Spirit doth alight.  
Yet it may happen that this helpless child  
Should far surpass the wonder here achieved,  
Leading a life of virtue, pure and mild,  
By this world's shallow splendour undeceived,  
May build in many hearts shrines undefiled  
With bright examples from his life received.

---

*THE BABY ON THE RUG.*

## XXIV.

THE sky that was in purity divine  
When the fresh dawn crept down upon the bay,  
Is harried now with clouds, nor comes a ray  
Of hope ;—of peace and happiness no sign.  
Against the silver sky, a brighter line  
The sea-horizon drew, and with the day  
Grew brighter still, and broader, till the sway  
Of those swift clouds seemed all things to consign  
To gloom and trouble. Turn, O turn and see  
A purity untroubled by a cloud ;  
A sweeter smile than from the glittering sea :—  
Though this angelic nature may be bowed  
By grief and pain, I dare to prophesy  
All soiling sin will from its presence fly.

SPEZIA : *December 26, 1864.*

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# POEMS

FOR THE MOST PART CONNECTED WITH

THE GREAT IRISH FAMINE, 1846—1849.

TO THOSE WHO LABOURED FOR THE POOR OF IRELAND  
IN THE DAY OF THEIR DISTRESS.

## Sonnets.

### *IRISH COLONIZATION.*

WRITTEN DURING IRELAND'S 'GREAT FAMINE.'

#### I.

FELL the tall pines. Thou nobler Argo, leap  
Wide-winged deliverer, on the ocean floods ;  
And westward waft the astonished multitudes  
That rot inert and hideous Sabbath keep  
Or, stung to madness, guiltier ruin heap  
On their own heads. No longer fabled Gods  
Subdue vexed waves with tridents and pearl rods ;  
Yet round that bark heroic, Gods shall sweep  
And guard an infant Nation. Hope shall flush  
With far Hesperean welcome billows hoary :  
Valour and virtue, love and joy, and glory  
A storm-borne Iris, shall before you rush ;  
And there descending, where your towers shall stand  
Look back full faced and shout, ' Britannia, land ! '

---

#### II.

I HEARD, in deep prophetic trance immersed,  
The wave, keel-cut kissing the ship's dark side :  
Anon men shouted and the cliffs replied :  
O what a vision from the darkness burst !

Europe so fair a city never nursed

As met me there ! It clasped in crescent wide  
The gulf, it crowned the isles, the subject tide  
O'er-strode with bridges and with quays coerced.  
In marble from unnumbered mountains robed,

With altar-shaped Acropolis and crest  
There sat the queenly City throned and globed :  
Full well that beaming countenance expressed  
The soul of a great People. From its eye  
Shone forth a second Britain's empery.

---

### III.

How looks a mother on her babe, a bard  
On some life-laboured song ? With humble pride  
And self-less love and joy to awe allied :  
So should a State that severed self regard,  
Her child beyond the waves. Great Nature's ward,  
And Time's, that child one day with God for guide,  
Shall waft its parent's image far and wide ;  
Yea, and its Maker's if by sin unmarred.

Conquest I deem a vulgar pastime : trade  
Shifts like the winds ; and power but comes to go ;  
But this is glorious, o'er the earth to sow  
The seed of Nations ; darkness to invade  
With light ; to plant, where silence reigned and death  
The thrones of British Law and towers of Christian  
Faith.

---



## IV.

ENGLAND, magnanimous art thou in name :  
 Magnanimous in nature once thou wert ;  
 But that which oftentimes lags behind desert  
 And crowns the dead, as oft survives it—fame.  
 Can she whose hand a merchant's pen makes tame  
 Or sneer of nameless scribe ; can she whose heart  
 In camp or senate still is at the mart  
 A Nation's toils a Nation's honours claim ?  
 Thy shield of old torn Poland twice and thrice  
 Invoked : thy help as vainly Ireland asks  
 Pointing with stark, lean finger, from the crest  
 Of western cliffs plague-stricken to the West  
 Grey-haired though young. When heat is sucked  
 from ice,  
 Then shall a Firm discharge a Nation's tasks.\*

---

 THE YEAR OF SORROW—IRELAND—1849.

## I.—SPRING.

## I.

ONCE more, through God's high will, and grace  
 Of hours that each its task fulfils,  
 Heart-healing Spring resumes her place  
 The valley throngs and scales the hills ;

\* For the very large *Private* Charities of England during the Famine Years, Ireland has ever been grateful. Neither did the public policy then adopted lack liberality. But, in spite of the warnings of Ireland's wisest sons, grievous mistakes were made.

## II.

In vain. From earth's deep heart o'ercharged  
The exulting life runs o'er in flowers ;  
The slave unfed is unenlarged :  
In darkness sleep a Nation's powers.

## III.

Who knows not Spring ? Who doubts, when blows  
Her breath, that Spring is come indeed ?  
The swallow doubts not ; nor the rose  
That stirs, but wakes not ; nor the weed.

## IV.

I feel her near but see her not ;  
For these with pain uplifted eyes  
Fall back repulsed, and vapours blot  
The vision of the earth and skies.

## V.

I see her not : I feel her near,  
As, charioted in mildest airs  
She sails through yon empyreal sphere  
And in her arms and bosom bears

## VI.

That urn of flowers and lustral dew  
Whose sacred balm, o'er all things shed  
Revives the weak, the old renews  
And crowns with votive wreaths the dead.

## VII.

Once more the cuckoo's call I hear ;  
I know, in many a glen profound  
The earliest violets of the year  
Rise up like water from the ground.

## VIII.

The thorn I know once more is white ;  
And, far down many a forest dale  
The anemones in dubious light  
Are trembling like a bridal veil.

## IX.

By streams released that singing flow  
From craggy shelf through sylvan glades  
The pale narcissus, well I know,  
Smiles hour by hour on greener shades.

## X.

The honeyed cowslip tufts once more  
The golden slopes ; with gradual ray  
The primrose stars the rock and o'er  
The wood-path strews its milky way.

## XI.

From ruined huts and holes come forth  
Old men, and look upon the sky !  
The Power Divine is on the earth :  
Give thanks to God before ye die !

## XII.

And ye, O children worn and weak  
Who care no more with flowers to play  
Lean on the grass your cold, thin cheek,  
And those slight hands, and whispering, say,

## XIII.

‘ Stern Mother of a race unblest,  
In promise kindly, cold in deed,  
Take back, O Earth, into thy breast  
The children whom thou wilt not feed.’

## II.—SUMMER.

## I.

APPROVED by works of love and might  
The Year, consummated and crowned,  
Has scaled the zenith's purple height  
And flings his robe the earth around.

## II.

Impassioned stillness—fervours calm—  
Brood vast and bright o'er land and deep :  
The warrior sleeps beneath the palm ;  
The dark-eyed captive guards his sleep.

## III.

The Iberian labourer rests from toil ;  
Sicilian virgins twine the dance ;  
Laugh Tuscan vales in wine and oil ;  
Fresh laurels flash from brows of France.

## IV.

Far off in regions of the North  
The hunter drops his winter fur ;  
Sun-stricken babes their feet stretch forth ;  
And nested dormice feebly stir.

## V.

But thou, O land of many woes !  
What cheer is thine ? Again the breath  
Of proved Destruction o'er thee blows  
And sentenced fields grow black in death.

## VI.

In horror of a new despair  
His blood-shot eyes the peasant strains  
With hands clenched fast and lifted hair  
Along the daily-darkening plains.

## VII.

Behold, O People ! thou shalt die !  
What art thou better than thy sires ?  
The hunted deer a weeping eye  
Turns on his birthplace, and expires.

## VIII.

Lo ! as the closing of a book  
Or statue from its base o'erthrown  
Or blasted wood or dried-up brook  
Name, race, and nation, thou art gone.

## IX.

The stranger shall thy hearth possess ;  
The stranger build upon thy grave.  
But know this also—he, not less  
His limit and his term shall have.

## X.

Once more thy volume open cast  
In thunder forth shall sound thy name ;  
Thy forest, hot at heart, at last  
God's breath shall kindle into flame.

## XI.

Thy brook dried up a cloud shall rise  
And stretch an hourly widening hand  
In God's high judgement through the skies  
And onward o'er the Invader's land.

## XII.

Of thine, one day, a remnant left  
Shall raise o'er earth a Prophet's rod  
And teach far coasts of Faith bereft  
The names of Ireland, and of God.

## III.—AUTUMN.

## I.

THEN die, thou Year ; thy work is done :  
The work ill done is done at last ;  
Far off, beyond that sinking sun  
Which sets in blood, I hear the blast

## II.

That sings thy dirge, and says, 'Ascend,  
And answer make amid thy peers  
Since all things here must have an end,  
Thou latest of the famine years !'

## III.

I join that voice. No joy have I  
In all thy purple and thy gold  
Nor in that nine-fold harmony  
From forest on to forest rolled ;

## IV.

Nor in that stormy western fire,  
Which burns on ocean's gloomy bed,  
And hurls as from a funeral pyre  
A glare that strikes the mountain's head ;

## V.

And writes on low-hung clouds its lines  
Of cyphered flame with hurrying hand,  
And flings amid the topmost pines  
That crown the steep a burning brand.

## VI.

Make answer, Year, for all thy dead,  
Who found not rest in hallowed earth,  
The widowed wife, the father fled  
The babe age-stricken from its birth.

## VII.

Make answer, Year, for virtue lost,  
For courage proof 'gainst fraud and force  
Now waning like a noontide ghost,  
Affections poisoned at their source.

## VIII.

The labourer spurned his lying spade ;  
The yeoman spurned his useless plough ;  
The pauper spurned the unwholesome aid  
Obtruded once exhausted now.

## IX.

Dread Power Unknown ! Whom mortal years  
Nor touch, nor tempt ; Who sitt'st sublime  
In night of night, O bid thy spheres  
Resound at last a funeral chime !

## X.

Call up at last the afflicted race  
Whose Sorrow nears its ending.—Sore,  
For centuries, their strife : the place  
That knew them once shall know no more !

## IV.—WINTER.

## I.

FALL, snow, and cease not ! Flake by flake  
The decent winding-sheet compose :  
Thy task is just and pious ; make  
An end of blasphemies and woes.

## II.

Fall flake by flake ! by thee alone  
Last friend, the sleeping draught is given :  
Kind nurse, by thee the couch is strewn  
The couch whose covering is from heaven.

## III.

Descend and clasp the mountain's crest ;  
Inherit plain and valley deep :  
This night on thy maternal breast  
A vanquished nation dies in sleep.

## IV.

Lo ! from the starry Temple Gates  
Death rides and bears the flag of peace ;  
The combatants he separates ;  
He bids the wrath of ages cease.

## V.

Descend, benignant Power ! But O  
Ye torrents, shake no more the vale,  
Dark streams, in silence seaward flow :  
Thou rising storm remit thy wail.



## VI.

Shake not, to-night, the cliffs of Moher  
Nor Brandon's base, rough sea ! Thou Isle,  
The Rite proceeds ! From shore to shore  
Hold in thy gathered breath the while.

## VII.

Fall, snow ! in stillness fall, like dew  
On church's roof and cedar's fan ;  
And mould thyself on pine and yew  
And on the awful face of man.

## VIII.

Without a sound, without a stir,  
In streets and wolds, on rock and mound  
O, omnipresent Comforter  
By thee, this night, the lost are found !

## IX.

On quaking moor, and mountain moss  
With eyes upstaring at the sky  
And arms extended like a cross  
The long-expectant sufferers lie.

## X.

Bend o'er them, white-robed Acolyte !  
Put forth thine hand from cloud and mist !  
And minister the last sad Rite,  
Where altar there is none, nor priest.

## XI.

Touch thou the gates of soul and sense ;  
Touch darkening eyes and dying ears ;  
Touch stiffening hands and feet, and thence  
Remove the trace of sins and tears.

## XII.

And ere thou seal those filmèd eyes  
· Into God's urn thy fingers dip,  
And lay, 'mid eucharistic sighs,  
The sacred wafer on the lip.

## XIII.

'This night the Absolver issues forth :  
This night the Eternal Victim bleeds :  
O winds and woods ! O heaven and earth !  
Be still this night. The Rite proceeds !

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*WIDOWHOOD.*

1848.

Not thou alone, but all things fair and good  
Live here bereft in vestal widowhood  
Or wane in radiant circlet incomplete.  
Memory, in widow's weeds, with naked feet  
Stands on a tombstone. Hope, with tearful eyes  
Stares all night long on unillumined skies.  
Virtue, an orphan, begs from door to door :  
Beside a cold hearth on a stranger's floor  
Sits exiled Honour. Song, a vacant type  
Hangs on that tree, whose fruitage ne'er was ripe  
Her harp, and bids the casual wind thereon  
Lament what might be, fabling what is gone.  
Our childhood's world of wonder melts like dew ;  
Youth's guardian genius bids our youth adieu  
And oft the wedded is a widow too.  
The best of bridals here is but a troth ;  
Only in heaven is ratified the oath :

There, there alone, is clasped in full fruition  
That sacred joy which passed not Eden's gates,  
For here the soul is mocked with dream and vision,  
And outward sense, uniting, separates.  
The Bride of Brides, a maid and widow here,  
Invokes her Lord, and finds—a Comforter :  
Her loftiest fane is but a visible porch  
To sealed Creation's omnipresent Church.

Zealous that nobler gifts than earth's should live  
Fortune I praise ; but praise her, fugitive.  
The Roman praised her permanent ; \* but we  
Have learned her lore, and paid a heavy fee,  
Have tracked her promise to its brake of wiles,  
And sounded all the shallows of her smiles.  
Fortune not gives but sells, and takes instead  
A heart made servile, and a discrowned head.  
Too soon she comes, and drowns in swamps of sloth  
The soul contemplative and active ; both ;  
Or comes too late and, with malignant art  
Leaps on the lance that rives the sufferer's heart  
Showering her affluence on a breast supine.  
Her best of gifts the usurer's seal and sign  
Sustain, and pawn man's life to Destiny.  
Ah ! mightier things than man like man can die !

Between the ruin and the work half done  
I sit : the raw wreck is the sorrier one.  
Here drops old Desmond's Keep in slow decay :  
There the unfinished Mole is washed away.  
The moment's fickle promise, and the vast  
And consummated greatness, both are past.

\* ' *Laudo manentem.* '—HORACE.

We sink, and none is better for our fall :  
We suffer most : but suffering comes to all :  
Our sighs but echoes are of earlier sighs ;  
And in our agonies we plagiarize.  
O'er all the earth old States in ruin lie,  
And new Ambitions topple from their sky :  
Greatness walks lame while clad in mortal mould ;  
The good are weak : unrighteous are the bold.  
Love by Self-love is murdered, or Distrust ;  
And earth-born Virtue has its 'dust to dust.'  
This Ireland knows. The famine years go by,  
And each its ranks of carnage heaps more high :  
What voice once manly and what hand once strong  
Arraigns, resists, or mitigates the wrong ?  
The future shall be as the present hour :  
The havoc past, again the slaves of Power  
Shall boast because once more the harvest waves  
In fraudulent brightness o'er a million graves.  
Why weep for ties once ours, relaxed or broken ?  
If weep we must, our tears are all bespoken :  
One thing is worthy of them, one alone—  
A world's inherent baseness ; and our own.

Type of my country, sad, and chaste, and wise !  
Forgive the gaze of too regardful eyes :  
I saw the black robe, and the aspect pale  
And heard in dream that country's dying wail.  
Like Night her form arose : as shades in night  
Are lost thy sorrowing beauty vanished from my  
sight.

*THE LAST IRISH GAEL TO THE LAST  
IRISH NORMAN ;*

OR, THE LAST IRISH CONFISCATION.

A PREDICTION, 1848.

YOUR bark in turn is freighted. O'er the seas  
You seek a refuge at the Antipodes.  
Australia waits you. O my Lord, beware !  
Australia ! Floats not England's standard there ?  
Tyrconnell and Tyrone found rest more nigh :  
Shrined on St. Peter's Mount \* their ashes lie.  
Their cause is mine—and foes, till now, were we ;  
Now friends, ashamed were I thy shame to see.  
Has Ruin no decorum ? Grief no sense ?  
Shall England house thee ? England drives thee  
hence !

O worker of thy sorrows with a vow  
Bind thou that head reduced, and careful brow  
Wholly to root that idol from thy heart :  
Swear that thy race never shall have a part  
In aught that England boasts, achieves, confers :  
Her past is thine—thy future is not hers.

Loosed from the agony of fruitless strife  
You stand, a lost man 'mid the wreck of life  
And round you gaze. Sad Eva also gazed  
All round that bridal field of blood, amazed ;  
Spoused to new fortunes. But your head is grey !  
Beyond your castle droops the dying day ;

\* St. Pietro in Montorio.

And, drifting down loose gusts of wailing wind,  
 Night comes with rain before and frost behind.  
 Lean men that groped for sea-weeds on the shore  
 All day, now hide in holes on fen and moor.  
 The cliffs lean forth their brows to meet the scourge  
 Of blast on blast : around their base the surge  
 Welters in shades from iron headlands thrown :  
 Through chasm and cave subaqueous thunders moan—  
 That sound thou lov'st ! Once more the Desmonds  
 fall :

To-night old Wrongs shake hands in History's hall ;  
 And, clashing through responsive vaults of Time,  
 Old peals funereal marry chime to chime.  
 Of such no more ! Beside your fireless hearth  
 Sit one night yet : and, moody or in mirth  
 Compare the past and present, and record  
 The fortunes of your Order in a word.  
 England first used, then spurned it ! Hour by hour,  
 For centuries her laws, her fame, her power  
 Hung on its hand. It gloried to sustain  
 High o'er the clouds that sweep the Atlantic main,  
 The banner with her blazonries enrolled :  
 Then came the change, and ye were bought and  
 sold :

Then came the change, and ye received your due.  
 Sir, to your country had ye proved as true  
 As to your England, she had held by you :  
 Ruin ye might have proved ; ye might have known  
 Even then, the scorn of others—not your own !

Pardon hard words. Your Race, not mine, is hard :  
 But wounds and work the hand too soft have scarred :  
 We are your elders—first-born in distress ;  
 And century-seasoned woes grow pitiless.

Hierarchs are we in pain, where ye but learn :  
 We have an Unction, and our Rite is stern.  
 If on our brows still hang ancestral glooms,  
 Forgive the children of the Catacombs.  
 What have the dead to do with love or ruth ?  
 I died ; and live once more—I live for Truth :  
 Hope and delusion trouble me no more :  
 Therefore, expatriate on my native shore  
 Anguish and doubt shake other nerves, not mine :  
 I drop no tear into the bitter brine :  
 The world in which I move is masculine.

Why to Australia ? Britain too was dear :  
 Must, then, the Britain of the southern sphere  
 Rack you in turn ? Seek you once more to prove  
 The furies of a scorned, unnatural love  
 That cleaves to insult and on injury feeds  
 And, upon both cheeks stricken, burns and bleeds ?  
 Son of the North, why seek you not once more  
 The coasts where sang the warrior Scald of yore ?  
 If unhistoric regions you must tread,  
 Hallowed by no communion with the dead,  
 Never by saint, or sage, or hero trod ;  
 Where never lifted fane upraised to God  
 In turn, the hearts of sequent generations,  
 Where never manly races rose to nations  
 Marshalled by knightly arm or kingly eye ;  
 If with new fortunes a new earth you try,  
 Then seek, oh, seek her in her purity !  
 Drain not civilization's dregs and lees.  
 In many an island clipt by tropic seas,  
 Nature keeps yet a race by arts untamed,  
 Who live half-innocent and unashamed.  
 Ambition frets not them. In regions calm

Mid prairies vast, or under banks of palm,  
 They sing light wars and unafflicting loves  
 And vanish as the echo leaves the groves !  
 Smooth space divides their cradles and their graves :  
 What are they ? Apparitions—casual waves  
 Heaved up in Time's successive harmony !  
 Brief smiles of nature followed by a sigh !  
 Why not with such abide awhile and die ?

O, summoned ere thy death to that repose  
 The grave concedes to others ! by thy foes  
 Franchised with that which friendship never gave ;  
 A heart as free from tremors as the grave !  
 Last of a race whose helm and lance were known  
 In furthest lands—now exiled from thine own—  
 Give thanks ! How many a sight is spared to thee  
 Which we, thy sires in suffering, saw and see !  
 Thou hast beheld thy country, by the shocks  
 Of sequent winters, driven upon the rocks  
 High and more high. Thou shalt not, day by day,  
 See her dismembered planks, the wrecker's prey  
 Abused without remorse to uses base :  
 Thou hast beheld the home of all thy race  
 Their lawns, their walks, and every grove and  
     stream  
 Their very tombs—pass from thee like a dream  
 And leave thee bare. But thou shalt not behold  
 Thy woods devastated, nor gathering mould  
 Subdue the arms high hung and blight the bloom  
 Of pomps heraldic redd'ning scroll and tomb ;  
 Nor the starred azure touched by mists cold-lipped  
 Till choir and aisle are black as vault and crypt,  
 Nor from the blazoned missal wane and faint  
 The golden age of martyr, maid, and saint,



Umbria's high pathos, and the Tuscan might  
 And all thy wondering childhood's world of light.  
 Thou shalt not see that Cross thou loved'st so well  
 From minster towers rock-built, and hermit's cell  
 Swept by the self-same blast that sent the hind  
 Shivering to caves, and struck a kingdom blind !  
 All that was thine, while seas between thee roll  
 And them, in some still cloister of thy soul  
 Shall live, as, in a mother's heart inisled  
 Lives on the painless memory of a child  
 Buried a babe. One image all shall make  
 Still as the gleam of sunset-lighted lake  
 Kenned from a tower o'er leagues of wood and lawn ;  
 Or as perchance our planet looks, withdrawn  
 From some pure spirit that leaves her ; to his sight  
 Lessening, not lost—a disk of narrowing light  
 Sole-hung in regions of pure space afar—  
 Of old the world he lived in, now a star !

But the wind swells yon sails. Why waste we  
 breath ?

My Lord, for thy soul's sake, and a good death  
 Forget the things a Gael's unmannered pen  
 For thee records not but for later men.  
 Since hope is gone, let peace be thine instead.  
 The snows which heap too soon that Norman head,  
 Should calm it, and a heart that bleeds for aye  
 Has less to lose, and less to feel, each day.  
 Seek not thy joys when on the desolate shore  
 The raked rocks thunder, and the caverns roar,  
 And the woods moan, while shoots the setting sun  
 Discords of angry lights o'er billows dun.  
 Make white thy thoughts as is a Vestal's sleep ;  
 Bloodless : prolong, beside the murmuring deep,

Thy matutinal slumbers, till the bird  
 That tuned not broke them, is no longer heard.  
 The flowers the children of the Stranger bring  
 Indulgent take : permit their latest Spring  
 To lure from thee all bitterness and wrath :  
 Into Death's bosom, genial as a bath  
 Sink back absolved. Justice to God belongs :  
 Soul latest-stricken, leave with Him thy Wrongs !

Justice, o'er angels and o'er men supreme  
 Still in mid heaven sustains her balanced beam,  
 With whose vast scales, whether they sink or rise,  
 The poles of earth are forced to sympathize.  
 Unseen she rules, wrapped round in cloud and awe ;  
 Her silence is the seal of mortal law ;  
 Her voice the harmony of every sphere :  
 Most distant is she ever yet most near,  
 Most strong when least regarded. From her eyes  
 That light goes forth which cheers the brave and  
     wise ;  
 And in the arm that lifts aloft her sword  
 Whatever might abides on earth is stored.  
 Fret not thyself. Watch thou, and wait, her hand !  
 The thunder-drops fall fast. In every land  
 Humanity breathes quick, and coming storm  
 Looks through man's soul with flashes swift and  
     warm :  
 The fiery trial and the shaken sieve  
 Shall prove the nations. What can live shall live.  
 Falsehood shall die ; and falsehoods widest-based  
 Shall lie the lowest, though they fall the last.

Down from the mountain of their greatness hurled  
 What witness bear the Nations to the World ?

Down rolled like rocks along the Alpine stairs  
 What warning voice is theirs, and ever theirs ?  
 Their ears the Nations unsubverted close  
 For who would hear the voice whose words are  
     Woes ?

Woe to ancestral greatness, if the dower  
 Of knightly worth confirm no more its power.  
 Woe to commercial strength, if sensual greed  
 Heap up like waves its insolent gold, nor heed  
 What solid good rewards the poor man's toil.  
 Woe to the Monarch, if the unholy oil  
 Of smooth-tongued flattery be his balm and chrism.  
 Woe to the State cleft through by social schism.  
 Woe to Religion, when the birds obscene  
 Of Heresy from porch to altar-screen  
 Range free ; while from the temple-eaves look down  
 Doubt's shadowy brood, ill-masked in cowl or gown.  
 Woe to the Rulers by the People ruled :  
 A People drowned in sense, and pride-befooled  
 Trampling were sages once, and martyrs, trod.  
 Ye Nations meet your doom, or serve at last your  
     God !

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### Irish Odes.

#### I.

### *AFTER ONE OF IRELAND'S FAMINE YEARS.*

#### I.

THE golden dome, the Tyrian dye  
 And all that yearning ocean

Yields from red caves to glorify  
 Ambition, or devotion  
 I leave them—leave the bank of Seine,  
 And those high towers that shade it  
 To tread my native fields again,  
 And muse on glories faded.

## II.

The monumental city stands  
 Around me in its vastness  
 Girdling the spoils of all the lands  
 In war's imperial fastness.  
 That stony scroll of every clime  
 Some record boasts or sample ;  
 Cathedral piles of oldest time  
 Huge arch and pillared temple.

## III.

They charge across the field of Mars ;  
 The earth beneath them shaking  
 As breaks a rocket into stars  
 The columned host is breaking :  
 It forms : it bursts :—new hosts succeed :  
 They sweep the Tuileries under :  
 The thunder from the Invalides  
 Answers the people's thunder.

## IV.

Behold ! my heart is elsewhere,  
 My soul these pageants cheer not :  
 A cry from famished vales I hear,  
 That cry which others hear not.

Sad eyes, as of a noontide ghost,  
Whose grief, not grace, first won me,  
'Mid regal pomps ye haunt me most :  
There most your power is on me.

## V.

Last night, what time the convent shades  
Far-stretched, the pavement darkened  
Where rose but late the barricades  
Alone I stood, and hearkened ;  
Thy dove-note, O my country, thine,  
In long-drawn modulation,  
Went by me, linked with words divine  
That stayed all earthly passion !

## VI.

A man entranced, and yet scarce sad,  
Since then I see in vision  
The scenes whereof my boyhood had  
Possession, not fruition.  
Dark shadows sweep the landscape o'er  
Each other still pursuing ;  
And lights from sinking suns once more  
Grow golden round the ruin.

## VII.

Dark violet hills extend their chains  
Athwart the saffron even,  
Pure purple stains not distant plains :  
And earth is mixed with heaven :  
One cloud o'er half the sunset broods ;  
And from its ragged edges  
The wine-black shower descends like floods  
Down dashed from diamond ledges.

## VIII.

Through rifted fanes the damp wind sweeps,  
 Chanting a dreary psalter :  
 I see the bones that rise in heaps  
     Where rose of old the altar ;  
 Once more beside the blessed well  
     I see the cripple kneeling :  
 I hear the broken chapel bell  
     Where organs once were pealing.

## IX.

I come, and bring not help, for God  
 Withdraws not yet the chalice :  
 Still on your plains by martyrs trod  
     And o'er your hills and valleys,  
 His name a suffering Saviour writes—  
     Letters black-drawn, and graven  
 On lowly huts, and castled heights,  
     Dim haunts of newt and raven.

## X.

I come, and bring not song ; for why  
 Should grief from fancy borrow ?  
 Why should a lute prolong a sigh,  
     Sophisticating sorrow ?  
 Dull opiates, down ! To wind and wave,  
     Lethæan weeds I fling you :  
 Anacreontics of the grave,  
     Not mine the heart to sing you !

## XI.

I come the breath of sighs to breathe,  
 Yet add not unto sighing  
 To kneel on graves, yet drop no wreath  
     On those in darkness lying.

Sleep, chaste and true, a little while,  
 The Saviour's flock, and Mary's :  
 And guard their reliques well, O Isle,  
 Thou chief of reliquaries !

## XII.

Blessed are they that claim no part  
 In this world's pomp and laughter :  
 Blessed the pure ; the meek of heart :—  
 Blest here ; more blest hereafter.  
 'Blessed the mourners.' Earthly goods  
 Are woes, the Master preaches :  
 Embrace thy sad beatitudes  
 And recognize thy riches !

## XIII.

And if, of every land the guest,  
 Thine exile back returning  
 Finds still one land unlike the rest  
 Discrowned, disgraced, and mourning,  
 Give thanks ! Thy flowers, to yonder skies  
 Transferred pure airs are tasting ;  
 And, stone by stone, thy temples rise  
 In regions everlasting.

## XIV.

Sleep well, unsung by idle rhymes  
 Ye sufferers late and lowly ;  
 Ye saints and seers of earlier times  
 Sleep well in cloisters holy !  
 Above your bed the bramble bends  
 The yew tree and the alder :  
 Sleep well, O fathers, and O friends  
 And in your silence moulder !

## II.

*THE MUSIC OF THE FUTURE.*

## I.

HARK, hark that chime ! The frosts are o'er !  
With song the birds force on the spring :  
Thus, Ireland, sang thy bards of yore :  
O younger bards, 'tis time to sing !  
Your Country's smile that with the past  
Lay dead so long—that vanished smile—  
Evoke it from the dark and cast  
Its light around a tearful isle !

## II.

Like severed locks that keep their light  
When all the stately frame is dust  
A Nation's songs preserve from blight  
A Nation's name, their sacred trust.  
Temple and pyramid eterne  
May memorize her deeds of power ;  
But only from the songs we learn  
How throbbed her life-blood hour by hour.

## III.

Thrice blest the strain that brings to one  
Who weeps by some Australian rill  
A worn out life far off begun  
His Country's countenance beauteous still !  
That 'mid Canadian wilds, or where  
Rich-feathered birds are void of song,  
Wafts back, 'mid gusts of Irish air  
Old wood-notes loved and lost so long !



## IV.

Well might the Muse at times forsake  
Her Grecian hill, and sit where swerve  
In lines like those of Hebé's neck  
That wood-girt bay, yon meadow's curve,\*  
Watching the primrose clusters throw  
Their wan light o'er that ivied cave,  
And airs by myrtles odoured blow  
The apple blossom on the wave !

## V.

Thrice blest the strain that, when the May  
Allures the young leaf from the bud  
When robins, thrushlike, shake the spray  
And deepening purples tinge the flood  
Kindles new worlds of love and truth,  
This world's lost Eden, still new-born,  
In breast of Irish maid or youth  
Reading beneath the Irish thorn :

## VI.

That wins from over-heated strife  
Blinded ambition's tool ; that o'er  
The fields of unsabbatic life  
The church-bells of the past can pour,  
Around the old oak lightning-scarred  
Can raise the untainted woods that rang  
When, throned 'mid listening kerns, the bard  
Of Oisín and of Patrick sang.

\* Foynes Island.

## VII.

Saturnian years return ! Ere long  
Peace, justice-built, the Isle shall cheer :  
Even now old sounds of ancient wrong  
At distance roll, but come not near :  
Past is the iron age—the storms  
That lashed the worn cliff, shock on shock ;  
The bird in tempest cradled warms  
At last her wings upon the rock.

## VIII.

How many a bard may lurk even now,  
Ireland, among thy noble poor !  
To Truth their genius let them vow,  
Scorn the bad Syren's tinsel lure ;  
Faithful to illustrate God's word  
On Nature writ ; or re-revealing,  
Through Nature, Christian lore transferred  
From faith to sight by songs heart-healing.

## IX.

Fair land ! the skill was thine of old  
Upon the illumined scroll to trace  
In heavenly blazon blue or gold  
The martyr's palm the angel's face ;  
One day on every Muse's page  
Be thine a saintly light to fling,  
And bathe the world's declining age  
Once more in its baptismal spring !

## X.

Man sows : a Hand Divine must reap :  
The toil wins most that wins not praise :

Stones buried in oblivion's deep  
May help the destined pile to raise,  
Foundations fix for pier or arch ;—  
Above that spirit-bridge's span  
To Faith's inviolate home may march,  
In God's good time, enfranchised man.

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## III.

*INDUSTRY.*

## I.

FREE children of a land set free  
A land late bound in fetters  
Demand ye why your critic guest  
Scoffs oft in you his betters ?  
Nor race alone nor creed to him  
Is stumbling-block, or scandal :  
Your rags offend ! he loathes in you  
Light purse and slipshod sandal.

## II.

His Virtue builds on Self-Respect :  
Upon that clay foundation  
Nor rock nor sand his trophies stand,  
The unit, and the nation :  
Sad martyr of a finite Hope,  
Nor seeks he, nor attains he  
The all-heavenly prize. He toils for Earth ;  
But what he seeks that gains he.

## III.

Grasp ye, with ampler aim, that good  
His tragic creed o'erprizes :  
With loftier Mind revere in him  
The Will that energizes  
The strong right hand, the lion heart  
The industrial truth and valour :  
When comes reverse he too can die,  
But not in dirt and squalor.

## IV.

Upon your brows the sunrise breaks :  
Then scorn the dirgeful ditty !  
Never, be sure, the heart was strong  
That dallied with self-pity.  
Your Fathers' part was this—to bear—  
That plague they bore God stayeth :  
Be yours to act ! To manhood born  
Be men ! ' Who worketh, prayeth.'

## V.

Son of the sorrowing Isle, her eyes  
Arraign thee for unkindness !  
Her shipless seas, her stagnant moors  
Accuse thy sloth or blindness :  
Set free her greatness ; sing to her  
New harvests waving round thee,  
'Thy son with golden robe hath girt  
With golden crown hath crowned thee !'

## VI.

Young maid that bend'st above thy wheel  
So pure, so meek, so simple,

The wool out-drawing as the smile  
 Developes from the dimple  
 Smile on ! thou cloth'st thy country's feet  
 Those feet long bare and bleeding !  
 Smile on ! thou send'st her Faith abroad  
 With seemlier swiftness speeding !

## VII.

Advance, victorious Years ! we land  
 On solid shores and stable :  
 Recede, dim seas, and painted cloud  
 Of legend and of fable !  
 The Heroic Age returns. Of old  
 Men fought with spears and arrows :  
 The sea-bank is the shield to-day :  
 The true knight drains and harrows !

## IV.

*THE FOUNDATION OF THE CATHOLIC  
 UNIVERSITY.*

1851.

## I.

THE Land, how lies she cold and dead  
 When on her brow long since  
 Freedom its virtuous radiance shed  
 And drove the darkness thence ?  
 The child at her its stone may fling ;  
 The dragon-fly her cheek may sting—  
 ' Ho ! murdered was she, or self-slain  
 This bulk with blackness in the brain ? '

## II.

'Tis past ! the Realm has learned its want :  
 The Nation wills its work :  
 Her eastern skies with lustre pant  
 Vacant till now and murk :  
 She vows with heavenly Faith to join  
 The manly mind, the fixed design  
 The mastering knowledge ; public heart ;  
 The nature crowned not quenched by art.

## III.

'Twas in a dolorous hour, 'twas then  
 When Famine plagued our coast,  
 And Penal Law,\* let loose again,  
 Trod feebly like a ghost  
 The land he once had stamped in blood  
 'Twas then her need we understood :  
 'Twas then her Genius from a cloud  
 Looked forth and cried to us aloud !

## IV.

The People heard ; and, far and wide,  
 Like some long clarion blast  
 By town, and plain, and mountain side  
 The inspiring Mandate passed :  
 His children's crust the peasant shared  
 With him that brought the news, and bared  
 A hearth already blank to aid  
 That great emprise so long delayed.

## V.

In Glendalough's green vale, and where  
 The skylark shrills o'er Lee

\* The Ecclesiastical Titles Act, 1851.

Once more her domes shall Wisdom rear  
 And house the brave and free ;  
 From Cashel's rock, th' old Minster fane  
 Shall laugh in light o'er Thomond's plain ;  
 Grey Arran pierce the sea-fog's gloom ;  
 Kildare her vestal lamp relume.

## VI.

Where Shannon sweeps by lost Athlone  
 To Limerick's Castle walls  
 New college choirs the river's moan  
 Shall tune at intervals ;  
 By kingly Clonmacnoise and Cong  
 Fresh notes shall burst of olden song  
 And by that wave-washed northern shore  
 Whereon they toiled—those ' Masters Four.'

## VII.

They toiled and toiled till sank the night :  
 They toiled till aching morn  
 Through mist of breakers rose with light  
 Uncertain and forlorn :  
 Their country's Present overcast,  
 They vowed thus much should live—her Past !  
 A beam o'er graves heroic shed  
 And haunt with dreams the Oppressor's bed.

## VIII.

Lo ! where we stand one day shall spread  
 Cloisters like branching wood :  
 On the great Founder's sculptured head \*  
 Our Irish sunshine brood !

\* Dr. Newman.

I see the fountains gem the grass ;  
 Through murmuring courts the red gown pass ;  
 Religion's pageant and the vaunt  
 Of Learning mailed and militant.

## IX.

I see, entombed in marble state,  
     Roderick—O'More—Red Hugh ;  
 The two crowned Mourners\*—wise too late—  
     Their tardy wisdom rue :  
 I see the Martyrs of old time ;  
 The warriors hymned in Irish rhyme,  
 And Burke and Grattan, just in deed  
 Though nurslings of an alien creed.

## X.

The vision deepens : tower-cast shades  
     With sunset longer grow :—  
 High ranged round airy colonnades  
     Fronting that western glow,  
 Lean out stone Patrons, veiled all day  
 But vast at eve against the grey  
 Like those great Hopes that o'er us shine  
 Distinctest in our life's decline.

## XI.

'Tis night : the dusk arcades between  
     Glimmers, O Derg, thy Lake !  
 The May moon o'er it trails serene  
     Her silver-woven wake :

\* Charles I. and James II.



What songs are those? Each boat has crossed  
Half-way that radiance—and is lost  
Returning from each ivied pile  
That hallows Iniscaltra's Isle.

## XII.

The moon is set, and all is dark  
Yet still those oars keep time :  
The great clock shakes the courts, and hark,  
That many-steeped chime !  
From college on to college roll  
The peals o'er creek and woody knoll !—  
My Country, *will* it ! Fancy's store  
Is rich : yet Faith can grant thee more !

---

## V.

TO IRELAND—AGAINST FALSE  
FREEDOM.

## I.

THE Nations have their parts assign'd :  
The deaf one watches for the blind :  
The blind for him that hears not hears :  
Harmonious as the heavenly spheres  
Despite their outward fret and jar  
Their mutual ministrations are.  
Some shine on history's earlier page ;  
Some prop the world's declining age :  
One, one reserves her buried bloom  
To flower perchance on Winter's tomb.

## II.

Greece, weak of Will but strong in Thought,  
To Rome her arts and science brought :  
Rome, strong yet barbarous, gain'd from her  
A staff, but, like Saint Christopher  
Knew not for whom his strength to use  
What yoke to bear, what master choose.  
His neck the giant bent !—thereon  
The Babe of Bethlehem sat ! Anon  
That staff his prop, that sacred freight  
His guide, he waded through the strait  
And enter'd at a new world's gate.

## III.

On that new stage were played once more  
The parts in Greece rehearsed before :  
Round fame's Olympic stadium vast  
The new-born, emulous Nations raced ;  
Now Spain, now France the headship won  
Unrisen the Russian Macedon :  
But naught, O Ireland, like to thee  
Hath been ! A Sphinx-like mystery  
At the world's feast thou sat'st death-pale ;  
And blood-stains tinged thy sable veil.

## IV.

Apostle, first, of worlds unseen !  
For ages, then, deject and mean :—  
Be sure, sad land, a concord lay  
Between thy darkness and thy day !  
Thy hand, had temporal gifts been thine,  
Had lost perchance the things divine.

Truth's witness sole ! The insurgent North  
Gave way when falsehood's flood went forth ;  
On the scarr'd coasts deform'd and cleft  
Thou, like the Church's Rock, wert left !

## V.

That Tudor tyranny which stood  
'Mid wrecks of Faith, was quench'd in blood  
When Charles, its child and victim, lay  
The Rebel-Prophet's bleeding prey.  
Once more the destined wheel goes round !  
Heads royal long are half discrown'd :  
Ancestral rights decline and die :—  
Thus Despotism and Anarchy  
Alternate each the other chase  
Twin Bacchantes wreathed around one vase.

## VI.

The future sleeps in night : but thou  
O Island of the branded brow  
Her flatteries scorn who rear'd by Seine  
Fraternity's ensanguined reign  
And for a sceptre twice abhorr'd  
Twice welcomed the Cesarian sword !  
Thy past, thy hopes, are thine alone !  
Though crush'd around thee and o'erthrown,  
The majesty of civil might  
The hierarchy of social right  
Firm state in thee for ever hold !  
Religion was their life and mould.

## VII.

The vulgar, dog-like eye can see  
Only the ignobler traits in thee ;

Quaint follies of a fleeting time ;  
 Dark reliques of the Oppressor's crime.  
 The Seer—what sees he ? What the West  
 Has ne'er except in thee possess'd ;  
 The childlike Faith, the Will like fate,  
 And that Theistic Instinct great  
 New worlds that summons from the abyss  
 'The balance to redress of this.'

## VIII.

Wait thou the end ; and spurn the while  
 False Freedom's meretricious smile !  
 Stoop not thy front to anticipate  
 A triumph certain ! Watch and wait !  
 The schismatic, by birth akin  
 To Socialist and Jacobin,  
 Will claim, when shift the scales of power  
 His natural place. Be thine that hour  
 With good his evil to requite ;  
 To save him in his own despite ;  
 And backward scare the brood of night !

*SONNET.*

SARSFIELD AND CLARE.

SILENT they slumber in the unwholesome shade :  
 And why lament them ? Virtue too can die :  
 Old wisdom labours in extremity ;  
 And greatness stands aghast, and cries for aid  
 Full often : aye, and honour grows dismayed ;  
 And all those eagle hopes so pure and high

Which soar aloft in youth's unclouded sky  
Drop dustward, self-subverted, self-betrayed.  
Call it not joy to walk the immortal floor  
Of this exulting earth, nor peace to lie  
Where the thronged marbles awe the passer by :  
True rest is this ; the task, the mission o'er,  
To bide God's time and man's neglect to bear—  
Hail, loyal Sarsfield ! Hail, high-hearted Clare !

---

*TO CHARLES COUNT DE MONTALEMBERT,*

WITH A COPY OF 'INISFAIL.'

YOUR spirit walks in halls of light :  
On earth you breathe its sunnier climes :  
How can an Irish muse invite  
Your fancy thus to sorrowing rhymes ?

But you have fought the Church's fight !  
My Country's Cause and hers are one :  
And every Cause that rests on Right  
Invokes Religion's bravest son.

---

SCOTLAND reveres her great Montrose,  
Scotland bewails her brave Dundee !  
With Alfred's memory England glows :—  
What lethal hemlock freezes thee

My country, that thy trophies rise  
To noteless men, or men ill-famed,  
While they thy manlier destinies  
Who shaped, so long remain unnamed ?

The Dutchman strides his steed new-gilt  
 In thy chief city's stateliest way ;  
 The Kings thy monarchy who built  
 Or died to save it, where are they ?

Clontarf ! That King who smote the Dane  
 That King who raised a realm laid low—  
 On thee what hath he ? Benburb's plain  
 No record bears of Owen Roe !

Forgotten now as Nial and Conn  
 Are those twin stars of Yellow-Ford  
 Who freed Tyrconnell and Tyrone  
 Their country's altars who restored.

Ireland awake ! For thine own weal  
 Yield thy great Dead their honours late :  
 Those only understand who *feel*  
 How self-disfranchised are the ingrate !

## Sonnets.

### I.

#### *THE IRISH CONSTITUTION OF 1782.*

NOBLES of Ireland ! they your work arraign  
 That won your victory ! Lightning-like the thrill  
 Of Liberty speeds on ! O land, be still !  
 Your patriots toiled, your vales rejoice in vain.  
 'Our Nation wears no more the servile stain !  
 Our People turns no more the Conqueror's mill !'

Nation and People have ye none ! Your Will  
 Tyrannic knits anew the severed chain ! \*  
 Nobles of Ireland that would fain be free  
 Set free your Irish Helots ! From that hour  
 Nation and People equalled shall ye stand  
 With England, side to side, or brand to brand !  
 Boast not till then a Freedom void of Power :  
 A laughing Devil mocks such Liberty !

---

 II.

*CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.*

WHAT man can check the aspiring life that thrills  
 And glows through all this multitudinous wood ;  
 That throbs in each minutest leaf and bud,  
 And, like a mighty wave ascending, fills  
 More high each day with flowers the encircling  
 hills ?

From earth's maternal heart her ancient blood  
 Mounts to her breast in milk ! her breath doth brood  
 O'er fields Spring-flashed round unimprisoned rills !  
 Such life is also in the breast of Man ;  
 Such blood is at the heart of every Nation  
 Not to be chained by Statesman's frown or ban.  
 Hope and be strong : fear and be weak ! The seed  
 Is sown : be ours the prosperous growth to feed  
 With food, not poison—Christian Education !

\* The refusal of Parliamentary Reform, and of Catholic Emancipation, rendered the Irish Constitution of 1782 a nullity.

## III.

*IRELAND AND THE 'ECCLESIASTICAL  
TITLES ACT.'*

THE statesmen of this day I deem a tribe  
 That dwarf-like strut, a pageant on a stage  
 Theirs but in pomp and outward equipage,  
 Ruled inly by the herd or hireling scribe.  
 They have this skill, the Power they dread to bribe :  
 This courage, war upon the weak to wage :  
 To turn from self a Nation's ignorant rage :  
 To unstaunch old wounds with edict or with jibe.  
 Ireland ! The unwise one saw thee in the dust  
 Crowned with eclipse, and garmented with night,  
 And in his heart he said, ' For her no day ! '  
 But thou long since hadst placed in God thy trust,  
 And knew'st that in the under-world, all light,  
 Thy sun moved eastward. Watch ! that East grows  
 grey !

1851.

---

*SHEPHERD SONG.*

FROM spinning at the threshold  
 From knitting at the stile  
 The lover sang, draw nearer, girl,  
 Bring close to me that smile !

Let Morrise weed the garden  
 Let Nora milk the cow ;  
 I hate to see thee bend and drop  
 The seed behind the plough.



Spring calls the wakening lily ;  
The lilac calls the bee ;  
The goldfinch calls his bright-eyed mate ;  
And Love and I call thee.

It is that wheel still droning  
That will not let thee hear  
Though laughs the gold-weed from the lake,  
The blossom from the breer.

---



THESE SONNETS ARE DEDICATED  
To CHARLES ELIOT NORTON  
By AUBREY DE VERE  
IN MEMORY OF OLD ROMAN DAYS



## I.

### *JOAN OF ARC.*

O ROYAL-HEARTED peasant-maid of France  
Whom that 'still voice' which those alone can hear  
Who walk in innocence and void of fear  
To war-fields called from rural toils or dance ;  
Whom God's great saints, revealed to thee in trance,  
For knightly onset girt with shield and spear,  
Thy task a Christian throne from dust to rear  
And work a Christian realm's deliverance ;  
O thou that charioted by martyr-fires  
Rod'st to thy God that task fulfilled, this day  
A deeper need a saintlier aid requires ;  
Invaders worse possess thy France, their prey ;  
This hour suffice not crown restored, or chrism :  
Her Foes *within* : thy prayers are exorcism.

1889.

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## II.

### *THE PRINCE OF WALES' TRIBUTE OF PRAISE TO FATHER DAMIEN.*

JUNE 1889.

'Twas just ! Fanatic strifes expire, self-slain :  
Nature lives on, and Faith. In years gone by  
'The Mass,' men clamoured, 'is Idolatry ;  
The Priest'—true hearts this hour such cries disdain :  
Men differ still, but kindly differ, fain

Like England's Prince to crown with eulogy  
 All those who live for God and man, who die  
 As Damien died—no barren death or vain.  
 Son of old Scottish kings in tartan clad  
 That chased the stag through woods of Calydon,  
 Were crowned at Scone, in Holyrood held sway,  
 Those kings, that martyr-priest in faith were one !  
 They heard thy words in Heaven. She most was glad  
 Thine ancestress who bled at Fotheringay.

## III.

*ON THE LATE PILGRIMAGE TO PARAY  
 LE MONIAL.*

A.D. 1873.

## I.

## THE BEATA.

SHE that amid the marbles and the gems  
 Richer than those that flatter king or queen  
 Couches, psalm-circled, 'neath yon tapers' sheen,  
 Despised the light of earthly diadems.  
 Cesarian pomps, by Tyber or by Thames,  
 For her no splendours held. Her vision keen,  
 Piercing earth's glories, found them all unclean  
 On every shore the sea's blue crescent hems.  
 Alone the Will of God to her was fair :  
 Her Universe reflected but His beam :  
 Yet man remains her client. Critic, spare  
 To brand that great life as a barren dream :  
 One gift she gave who claimed in gifts no part—  
 She drew man nearer to his Saviour's Heart.

## II.

## SANCTITY.

Not for the music of miraculous Deeds

Which through God's House resound at intervals  
Like marriage chimes gladdening far distant meads  
Or torrents echoing from the mountain walls

Not for bright Visions sent from heavenly halls ;  
Not for that blest \* Devotion—thine—which breeds  
Daily new helps for Time's advancing needs ;

'Tis not for these that grateful man installs  
Thy memory in his heart. The earth-shaking Word  
The all-wondrous Act, whole realms to justice  
won—

But shadows are of that, the Unseen, the Unheard,  
Which they whose Gods are Heroes hate and shun :  
For that thou *art* we love thee ; that which He  
His Saints Who fashions, worked, and was, in thee.

## IV.

*ST. CHRYSOSTOM'S RETURN FROM  
EXILE.†*

SAD is the music though the midnight seas  
Flash in the torch-light brighter than by day—

\* The Devotion to the Sacred Heart.

† Arcadius, Emperor of the East, banished St. Chrysostom. He died of his sufferings on his way to his place of exile, Pityus, on the eastern coast of the Euxine. Thirty years later Theodosius II., son of Arcadius, brought back the body of the Saint to Constantinople, and interred it, A.D. 438, in the Church of the Apostles. See *Leaves from St. John Chrysostom*, by Mary H. Allies, pp. 13—15.

Dirge for the dead. A hundred ships make way  
Like pyres of Norland kings, before the breeze.  
That night they pass the famed Symplegades ;  
At dawn they anchor in Byzantium's bay ;  
At noon, o'er streets flower-strewn with banners gay  
A regal train advances. Who are these ?  
An Emperor kneels before a Pontiff's bier,  
Suing the pardon of a Father's crime ;  
A penitent people high the coffin rear ;  
The ' Apostles' Church,' as in the ancient time,  
Receives once more her exiled Chrysostom—  
Fitlier this day he sleeps Saint Peter's guest at Rome.

---

## V.

*THE DEATH OF POPE HILDEBRAND.*

' JUSTICE I loved : the unrighteous way by me  
Was hated ; for that cause exile I die.'  
Thus Hildebrand ; his prelates wept hard by  
Save one, his best and dearest. All night he  
Had watched that Sufferer while Salerno's sea  
Beat on the neighbouring coasts. With kindling eye  
Fixed on the dying man he made reply  
Risen from the ground yet bending still his knee :  
' Father, not so ! All wrongs save one may rage  
Around God's Church, strike down its earthly Head :  
A prison may be his home, a rack his bed,—  
Exile he can not be for God hath sworn  
" The heathen I will make thy heritage  
And thy possession earth's remotest bourn." '



## VI.

*THE FORMULARY OF POPE HORMISDAS.\**

JANUARY 18, 1889.

‘THE Chalice Jesus raised, the Bread He brake,  
 Emperor, and ye his bishops of the East  
 Who share the Empire’s, not the Church’s feast,  
 At Peter’s board demand not to partake  
 Until not less those Words which Jesus spake,  
 “Peter thou art : upon this Rock I build  
 My Church”—Creative Words in act fulfilled—  
 Ye take into your hearts for Jesus’ sake.’  
 Thus wrote Hormisdas. Onward as a wind  
 That Spirit Divine Who o’er the waters moved  
 Wafted his legates saintly and approved :  
 Two thousand and five hundred bishops signed  
 The Pontiff’s ‘Rule’ † in Christ’s own words con-  
     fessed :  
 Died the revolt. That hour God’s Church found  
     rest.

## VII.

*THE SPANISH ARMADA AND THE  
 ENGLISH CATHOLICS.\**

A SPANISH fleet affront our English shores !  
 It must not be ; it shall not ! Sink or swim  
 Our Cause, our lamp of Hope burn bright or dim,  
 Long as o’er English cliffs the osprey soars,

\* See *The Holy See and the Wanderings of the Nations*,  
 p. 167, by Thomas W. Allies, K.C.S.G.

† Regula Fidei.

Long as on English coasts the breaker roars,  
 No alien flag shall scale our blue sea-rim,  
 No smoke from Spanish gun our skies bedim,  
 No foot from Parma stain our household floors !  
 Fair sirs, we question not your true intent  
 To prop true Faith, and Queens in wedlock born :  
 But foreign aid, and arms, and arts we scorn :  
 To native hearts and hands we trust the event :  
 The Right is ours ; with God the arbitrament :  
 At worst, beyond *His* night remains *His* morn !

---

## VIII.

*THE ISLAND OF IONA.\**

Not for the tombs of old Norwegian Kings  
 Or Scottish, iron-mailed, and crowned at Scone :  
 Not for those 'Island-Lords' † the Minstrel sings  
 As sang his sires in centuries past and flown ;  
 Not for yon grassy terrace breeze-o'erblown,  
 Yon crags to which the storm-wrecked shepherd clings  
 Eying far lights on isle and mountain thrown  
 As though from onward-sailing Angels' wings ;—  
 Iona ! 'Tis not these that yearly draw  
 Thy Pilgrims hither o'er the Northern sea  
 And hold them there spell-bound in loving awe :  
 That spell, Columba, is the thought of thee !  
 They gaze ; they muse ; 'these shores that Exile trod—  
 That Exile's sons gave England to her God !'

\* Columba, though a priest, had joined in an Irish battle. The penance imposed on him was perpetual exile from Ireland. He made Iona his abode till death, preaching on the adjacent shores. Montalembert affirms that later his Irish monks converted nearly three-quarters of Anglo-Saxon England.

† The 'Lords of the Isles.'

## IX.

*MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.\**

STRONG Land, by Wallace trod and Bruce: brave  
Land

That broke great Edward's ranks at Bannockburn:  
Fair Land whose breast, upheaved in Faith's bright  
morn

Breathed forth, like sighs of joy, these fanes that  
stand

Even now on Stirling's rock, Iona's strand;  
How long shall Justice point with sorrowing scorn

At that sole act which on thy brow time-worn  
So long unblemished, stamped so dark a brand?

A Queen there was, struck down in beauty's prime,  
Captive till death, religious, fearless, true:

The calunny that dogged her was a crime  
Of edge more trenchant than the axe that slew.

False nobles wrecked her, and a Rival's hate—  
Repent that wrong *thy* tears alone can expiate!

## X.

*A PORTRAIT OF ANNE BOLEYN.*

Ah, silver-tissued phantom lithe as hind  
Skimming dark glades! Ah, white as moon that  
dips

In storm-cloud black its crescent's glimmering tips!  
Ah, blithesome foot, swifter than wave or wind!

\* See Mr. Hosack's unanswered vindication of Mary.

Were those the mocking eyes whose *fiat* signed  
 Honour's death-warrant? Those the laughing lips  
 That o'er a realm's Religion breathed eclipse;  
 A King, once kingly, changed to false and blind?  
 Salomè new! was this the babe that played  
 With her own shadow 'mid the founts and flowers?  
 Death-sentenced Queen! was this the girl that prayed  
 Before our Lady's shrine, unmoved for hours?  
 I judge not her. The night before her death  
 She prayed her childhood's prayers—with tranquil  
 breath.

---

 XI.

*ON THE CONSECRATION OF ST. PATRICK'S  
 NEW CATHEDRAL AT ARMAGH.*

AUGUST 24, 1873.

THIS day the crime of ages stands reversed:  
 This day, re-risen, in saintlier sovereignty  
 Saint Patrick's towers invoke their native sky,  
 His second Temple lordlier than his first:  
 Orient once more, a vanished Hope hath burst  
 From night's black realm: in Stygian pageantry  
 The stormy wrecks of Penal years go by  
 Like ghosts remanded to their realms accurst.  
 Ho, Watcher on the summits! cry aloud,  
 How speeds the dawn? What promise gilds the East?  
 A Voice responds—thy voice, great Patriarch-Priest,  
 'I see a Race baptized as in the cloud:  
 I see a Nation round an Altar bowed:  
 I see God's People share His Marriage Feast.'

## XII.

*ON THE CONSECRATION OF IRELAND  
TO THE SACRED HEART.*

PASSION SUNDAY 1873.

LIFT up Thy gates, triumphant Heart Eterne  
Heart of the God-man! Heart that, throned on  
high,  
Larger than that starred palace of the sky  
In glory reignest, and in love dost burn!  
To Thee this day a People's heart doth yearn;  
To Thee, all eagle-winged, yet tremblingly  
Makes way; in Thee would live; for Thee would die,  
Zealous for Thee terrestrial crowns to spurn.  
'Lift up your heads ye everlasting gates,'  
And give a nation leave to enter in!  
The centuries ended of her adverse fates  
This day with God she hides her from the sin  
Of prosperous realms that trample gifts divine—  
Heart of the God-man, make Thy captive Thine!

---

## XIII.

*ON THE LAYING OF THE FOUNDATION  
STONE OF THE NEW CHURCH AT  
MAYNOOTH COLLEGE.*

OCTOBER 10, 1875.

THE PAST.

Not vain the faith and patience of the Saints!  
Not vain, sad Isle, thy many-centuried woes!

Thy day was tempest-cradled ; but its close  
Is splendour ; and the shattered forest's plaints  
In music die. No dull repining taints  
That ether pure of memory's realm, which far  
Recedes, like some long tract left waste by war,  
Some tract which eve with peaceful purple paints.  
Long time thy priests, my country, were thy poor :  
The Cross their book they raised the Sacrifice  
In ruined chancel, and on rainy moor :  
Behold, the great reward is come ! Arise,  
Fane long desired ! Beneath thy roofs of gold  
Throne the new rites—the creed and worship old !

## XIV.

## THE FOUNDATION STONE.

DESCEND, strong Stone, into my country's breast :  
Child of the sea-beat cliff, or skiey height,  
Descend, well-pleased, into the eternal night ;  
Amid the eternal silence make thy rest !  
Descend in hope, thou high, prophetic Guest,  
For God a covenant upon thee doth write :  
On thee His pledge is graved in words of might  
Plain as those mandates by His hand impressed,  
While Sinai's peaks made answer, thunder-riven,  
On the twinned Tablets of the Hebrew Law.  
This day the future with the past is wed ;  
The undying promise with the greatness dead ;  
Ireland this day her ancient pact with Heaven  
Renews in godly triumph, loving awe.

---

## XV.

*THE MAYNOOTH CENTENARY;*

OR, IRELAND'S VOCATION.

I HEARD a voice and turned me. From above  
 A heavenly City crowned with minsters fair  
 And college courts high-towered, through glittering air  
 Drew to our planet softly as a dove ;  
 Nearer that vision moved or seemed to move :  
 At last it reached our shores ; and I was 'ware  
 That all its walls were graved with text and prayer  
 Truth's legend old, God's book of endless Love.  
 Anon from all its gates there issued forth  
 Prophet-processions singing this : ' This day  
 Our task again reaches the ends of Earth !  
 Ireland gave mandate, and her sons obey,  
 Ireland, the Apostolic Land. Four-fold  
 Faith's victories new shall pass her victories old ! '   
 1895.

## XVI.

*THE NEW CATHOLIC CHURCH NEAR  
WINDERMERE.*

1885.

## I.

DEEP-BOSOMED vales of England's queenliest land,  
 And thou her amplest as her loveliest lake,  
 Be just, be grateful, and our joy partake !  
 Lo where a daughter of that Faith once banned

Takes 'mid your bosky slopes, once more her stand !  
Through yonder cloud I see a promise break ;  
'The land that slept, that land at last shall wake  
And hail yon Cross there raised at God's command,'  
From Langdale's pikes to Scawfell's loneliest wold  
Rejoice fair hills whose yew-woods teemed of old  
The bows at Crecy feared and Ascalon ;  
Rejoice thou most, grey Furness, early and late  
Warding our British Highlands' southern gate :  
Say to thy graves ; ' Rejoice ! the night is gone !'

## II.

Wordsworth, and Southey, and that other Name \*  
Fitly with these conjoined, whose Orphic lays  
Though few, gave help to tune discordant days,  
Whose insight puts our modern seers to shame,  
When to this Carmel of the North ye came  
Then young, no prophet race survived to raise  
Truth's standard old ; perforce in Error's maze  
Ye walked, though pure your feet and high your aim.  
Not less Truth's whisper, from Iona's Isle  
First breathed, still faintly clung to cliff and fell  
Like night-dews trembling round some ruined pile !  
That whisper to a trumpet's blast shall swell,  
And ye, great Souls with Fisher and with More  
Exulting hear it from the eternal shore.

## III.

Great men grow rarer daily ; great were these :  
Greater those tonsured Saints discalced, who trod,  
Now living Powers, not plaintive Memories,  
This God-loved land, and rest this day with God :

\* Coleridge.



Herbert who paced blue Derwent's flower-girt flood ;  
 Cuthbert, his friend, whose sea-girt diocese  
 From Lindisfarne to westward-throned St. Bees  
 Revered one crosier staff and prophet-rod ;  
 Old Bede, and countless more in Faith's glad morn  
 Who roamed Northumbria's bound, and glorified  
 Bernicia and Deira and Strathclyde :  
 Behold ! to them this day a child is born !  
 This day to God they lift their hands and say,  
 ' Bless this new Altar : bless Thy Land for aye.'

## XVII.

*WALNA CRAG, AND 'THE LADY'S  
 RAKE,' DERWENTWATER.*

1895.

Not Skiddaw, not Blencathara's 'skiey height,'  
 Not Derwent Isle, Lodare, not Borrodale,  
 So charmed in youth, so cheer in age my sight  
 As thou, O Walna Crag, and that sad tale  
 Of her who, rebel-roused at dead of night,  
 Caught up her Babe new-born ; still weak and frail  
 Claspings that Babe found strength yon cliff to scale  
 While fought far off her Lord to attest a right  
 By sophists mocked. King James' fall was just :  
 He sinned ; but blameless was King James' son ;  
 His claim was owned by James' ill-crowned  
     daughter :  
 Who charged with crime that Royal Youth ? Not one !  
 Who died to vindicate that claim august ?  
 That peerless Lady's Consort—Derwentwater.

## XVIII.

*ULSWATER.*

SEPTEMBER 5, 1895.

PENSIVE Ulswater, thanks ! Thy face once more  
I see. Hail, English Lakeland's duskiest Child,  
Duskiest, for, closest here around thee piled  
Her mountains fling their shades from shore to shore.  
Again thine Aira Force's 'gentle roar'  
I hear breeze-borne o'er heathery waste and wild ;  
Again I see, delightedly beguiled,  
Those daffodils thy Wordsworth sang of yore.\*  
The waves beside them 'they out-did in glee'  
That day. This hour perchance from yonder sky  
Their Poet sees them—she beside him, she †  
Who gazed with him through tears on Yarrow's  
bowers—  
Ah surely nothing bright and fair once ours,  
If wholly pure, can ever wholly die !

\* See Wordsworth's lines, 'I wandered lonely as a cloud,' etc.

† Wordsworth's sister.

# URBS ROMA

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF

CHARLES

COUNT DE MONTALEMBERT.



## Urbs Roma.

### *ST. PETER'S BY MOONLIGHT.*

#### I.

Low hung the moon when first I stood in Rome :  
Midway she seemed attracted from her sphere  
On those twin Fountains shining broad and clear  
Whose floods not mindless of their mountain home  
Rise there in clouds of rainbow mist and foam.  
That hour fulfilled the dream of many a year :  
Through that thin veil with joy akin to fear  
The steps I saw, the pillars, last the dome.  
A spiritual Empire there embodied stood :  
The Roman Church there met me face to face :  
Ages sealed up of evil and of good  
Slept in that circling colonnade's embrace.  
Alone I stood, a stranger and alone,  
Changed by that stony miracle to stone.

---

### *PONTIFIC MASS IN THE SISTINE CHAPEL.*

#### II.

FORTH from their latticed and mysterious cells  
The harmonies are spreading, onward rolled :

Ere long, by counter tides met and controlled,  
Midway more high the gathering tumult swells ;  
It sinks : a breeze the incense cloud dispels :  
Once more Sibylline forms, and Prophets stoled  
Look down, supreme of Art's high miracles,  
Upon the Church terrene. Once more, behold,  
With what an awful majesty of mien  
The Kingly Priest, his holy precincts rounding,  
Tramples the marbles of the sacred scene :  
The altar now he nears, and now the throne ;  
As though the Law were folded in his zone  
And all the Prophets in his skirts were sounding.

---

## *THE PILLAR OF TRAJAN.*

### III.

DEGRADING Art's augustest minist'rings  
Yon Pillar soars with sculptured forms embost  
Whose grace at that ambitious height is lost :  
Lo ! as the stony serpent twines its rings  
Priests, coursers, heralds, warriors, slaves, and kings  
Mingle, a tortuous mass confused and crost ;  
While Art, least honoured here where flattered most,  
Deplores in vain her prostituted springs  
By a fallen Angel at their source ill-stirred ;  
Unholy—thence unhealing ! What is aid  
Vouchsafed upon conditions that degrade  
To one who her allegiance hath transferred ?  
O Attic Art brought low, that here dost stand  
Full-fed, but hooded, on a tyrant's hand !

*THE ARCH OF TITUS.*

## IV.

I stood beneath the Arch of Titus long ;  
On Hebrew forms there sculptured long I pored ;  
Till fancy, by a distant clarion stung  
Woke : and methought there moved that arch toward  
A Roman Triumph. Lance and helm and sword  
Glittered ; white coursers tramped and trumpets  
rung :

Last came, car-borne a captive horde among  
The laurelled Boast of Rome—her destined Lord.  
As though by wings of unseen eagles fanned  
The Conqueror's cheek when first that Arch he saw  
Burned with the flush he strove in vain to quell—  
Titus ! a loftier arch than thine hath spanned  
Rome and the world with empery and law ;  
Thereof each stone was hewn from Israel !

---

*THE CAMPAGNA SEEN FROM ST. JOHN  
LATERAN.*

## V.

Was it the trampling of triumphant hosts  
That levelled thus yon plain, sea-like and hoary ;  
Armies from Rome sent forth to distant coasts  
And back returning clad with spoils of glory ?  
Around it loom cape, ridge, and promontory :  
Above it sunset shadows fleet like ghosts,

Fast-borne o'er keep and tomb whose ancient boasts  
By Time confuted, name have none in story.  
Fit seat for Rome ! for here is ample space  
Which greatness chiefly needs—severed alone  
By yonder aqueducts with queenly grace  
That sweep in curves concentric ever on  
Bridging a world subjected as a chart  
To that great City, head of earth and heart.

---

*BIRDS IN THE BATHS OF DIOCLETIAN.*

VI.

EGERIAN warbler ! unseen rhapsodist !  
Whose carols antedate the Roman spring ;  
Who, while the old grey walls, thy playmates, ring,  
Dost evermore on one deep strain insist,  
Flinging thy bell-notes through the sunset mist !  
Around thy haunt rich weeds and wall-flowers swing  
As in a breeze, the twilight crimsoning  
That sucks from them ærial amethyst—  
O for a Sibyl's insight to reveal  
That lore thou sing'st of ! Shall I guess it ? nay !  
Enough to hear thy strain : enough to feel  
O'er all the extended soul the freshness steal  
Of those ambrosial honeydews that weigh  
Down with sweet force the azure lids of day.

---



*THE 'MISERERE' IN THE SISTINE  
CHAPEL.*

VII.

FROM sadness on to sadness, woe to woe,  
Searching all depths of grief ineffable,  
Those sighs of the Forsaken sink and swell  
And to a piercing shrillness gathering, grow.  
Now one by one, commingling now, they flow :  
Now in the dark they die, a piteous knell,  
Lorn as the wail of exiled Israel  
Or Hagar weeping o'er her outcast. No—  
Never hath loss external forced such sighs !  
O ye with secret sins that inly bleed  
And drift from God, search out if ye are wise  
Your unrepented infelicities :  
And pray, whate'er the punishment decreed,  
It prove not exile from your Maker's eyes !

---

*THE 'MISERERE' IN THE SISTINE  
CHAPEL.*

VIII.

THOSE sounds expiring on mine ear, mine eye  
Was by their visual reflex strangely spelled :  
A vision of the Angels who rebelled  
Still hung before me, through the yielding sky  
Sinking on plumes outstretched imploringly :  
Their Tempter's hopes and theirs for ever quelled

They sank with hands upon their eyes close held  
And longed, methought, for death yet could not die.  
Down, ever down a mournful pageant streaming  
Like Souls in whom Despair hath slain Endeavour  
Inwoven choirs to ruin blindly tending,  
They sank. I wept as one who weeps while dreaming  
To see them, host on host, by doom descending  
Down the dim gulfs, for ever and for ever.

---

*THE MONUMENTS OF QUEEN CHRISTINA  
OF SWEDEN AND THE COUNTESS  
MATILDA IN ST. PETER'S.*

IX.

Lo, here, the crownless Queen of royal heart ;  
The Christian Queen that, vowed to Christ, laid down  
The infected sceptre and the apostate crown,  
Zealous with that dear Lord to bear her part  
Whom the blind North was 'adverse to desert.'  
To her what thing was Fortune's smile or frown,  
Fortune that stoles the knave, and thrones the clown  
Whose Church the palace is, whose Realm the mart?  
Christina, and Matilda ! Here they lie !  
One spurned a kingdom : dying, one endowed  
The meek one with the trappings of the proud  
And fixed her realm, a glittering gem, on high  
Star of that temporal crown by Peter worn—  
Sleep well, brave sisters, till the eternal morn !

---

*THE CATACOMBS.*

## X.

WHOEVER seeks for penitential days  
And vows that fitly on such days attend  
A region apt, his wanderings here may end :  
These caverns, winding in sepulchral maze  
Are stronger than the desert's loneliest ways  
Thoughts meek and sad with lofty thoughts to  
blend :—

Descend, great Pontiff ! Sovran Priest, descend !  
Let all the Princes of the Church upraise  
With annual rites their sceptres here to God !  
Kings of the nations, purpling those strange glooms  
With robes imperial on your faces sink  
Sink, and be saved, in those dread catacombs !  
And deeply of the inspiring incense drink  
That rises from the dust the Martyrs trod !

---

*THE APPIAN WAY.*

## XI.

AWE-STRUCK I gazed upon that rock-paved way,  
The Appian Road ; marmorean witness still  
To Rome's resistless stride and fateful Will,  
Which mocked at limits, opening out for aye  
Divergent paths to one imperial sway—  
The Nations verily their parts fulfil ;

And War must plough the fields which Law shall  
till ;

Therefore Rome triumphed till the appointed day.  
Then from the Catacombs, like waves up-burst  
The Host of God, and scaled as in an hour  
O'er all the earth the mountain seats of Power.  
Gladly in that baptismal flood immersed  
The old Empire died to live. Once more on high  
It sits ; now clothed with immortality.

---

*ON THE CROSS IN THE INTERIOR OF  
THE COLISEUM.*

XII.

FAR from his friends, his country, and his home,  
Perhaps on that small spot—ay doubtless there—  
Some Christian Martyr fell, in one wide stare  
Concentrating the myriad gaze of Rome.  
Now central stands beneath heaven's mighty dome  
The Cross which marks that spot ! Stranger, be-  
ware !

The Orb of Earth was framed that Cross to bear :  
And when, slow-tottering round an Empire's tomb  
These walls, within whose grey encincture vast  
That Cross for ages stands as in a shrine,  
Around their awful guest shall melt at last,  
Each stone descending to the earth shall say  
' Empires and Nations crumble : but that Sign  
Pre-eminent shall stand, and stand for aye !'

---

*THE FOUNTAIN OF EGERIA.*

## XIII.

FOR this cold fount the Sabine Saint and Sage  
Wooded by high thought forsook both camp and  
throne :

Here on his country's weal he mused alone

Calm-visaged as the planetary page :

That murmuring spring had power his cares to  
assuage :

Here—dim elsewhere as noontide moon fleece-strewn—

In this religious gloom distinctly shewn,

Egeria shared his kingly hermitage.

O pure as Arethusa, and more high !

Cleaving rough seas she spurned the irreverent love ;

Thine, Roman Nymph, a tenderer sanctity,

Bending like air that strong white head above

To breathe just counsel in a monarch's ear—

Those kings alone are blest to whom thy voice is  
dear !

---

*THE GRAVES OF TIRCONNEL AND  
TYRONE ON SAN PIETRO, IN  
MONTORIO.*

## XIV.

WITHIN Saint Peter's fane, that kindly hearth  
Where exiles crowned their earthly loads down cast,  
The Scottish Kings repose, their wanderings past  
In death more royal thrice than in their birth.

Near them, within a church of narrower girth  
 But, like it, with dilated memories vast,  
 Sad Ulster's Princes find their rest at last  
 Their home the holiest spot, save one, on earth.  
 This is that Mount which saw Saint Peter die !  
 Where stands yon dome stood once that Cross  
     reversed :

On this dread Hill, a Western Calvary,  
 The Empire and that Synagogue accurst  
 Clashed two ensanguined hands—like Cain—in one.  
 Sleep where the Apostle slept, Tirconnel and Tyrone !

*TO THE PILLAR THAT STANDS BESIDE  
 THE HIGH ALTAR AT 'ST. PAUL'S  
 OUTSIDE THE WALLS,' ROME.\**

XV.

A CONQUEROR called thee from the eternal night  
 And said, ' Ascend from thy dark mother's breast ;  
 Sustain my glory on thy sunlike crest  
 And by mine altar watch—mine acolyte.'  
 A Poet, wandering from Helvellyn's height,

\* This pillar was destined by the first Napoleon for the decoration of the triumphal arch at Milan, the intended monument of his Italian victories. His fall frustrated the design. Many years later, Wordsworth, while descending into Italy by the Simplon Pass, came upon the unfinished mass as it lay half raised from the Alpine quarry, and addressed to it his sublime sonnet beginning :

' Ambition, following down the far-famed slope,'  
 and proceeding :

' Rest where thy course was stayed by power Divine.'

Beheld thee dead ere born. That Alpine guest  
Adjured thee, 'Where thou liest, for ever rest,  
And freeze those hearts that trust in mortal might.'  
The years went by ; then, clear above that cloud  
Which blinds the nations from her Roman throne  
Thus spake the Universal Church aloud :  
'Arise at last, thou long-expectant stone !  
For God predestined, consummate thy vow :  
Advance ; and where the Apostle stood stand thou !'

---





SAINT PETER'S CHAINS;

OR,

ROME AND THE ITALIAN REVOLUTION.

TO THE GREAT MEMORY OF  
POPE PIUS THE NINTH.

*June 1, 1897.*

## PREFACE.

THE following Sonnets were written in connection with the Roman Revolution of 1870, and the abolition of the Pope's Temporal Supremacy, or in anticipation of those events. Few men think now of restoring the old order of things in Italy, whether by force or by diplomatic pressure equivalent to force. The issue depends on the growth of a sound public opinion throughout Europe, and especially in Italy herself. In this matter each man has his duties; but not many now remember what all once knew, or are aware of the imminent dangers that threaten Europe owing to the wrong done at Rome.

No necessary connection exists between the Roman Revolution and the Italian Revolution, taken at large. There were at least two alternative methods by which an entire Italian Independence might have been created without any interference with the Pope's liberty. One of these was the ideal of the earlier Italian patriots and of many Italian statesmen at the beginning of the recent struggle. It was an Italian Confederation in which the chief Italian States were to preserve their political and also their historical individuality. The other alternative was the fusion of the Italian States, excepting

only Rome with her Campagna, in a single monarchy. This latter course, however objectionable on other grounds, would at least have left the Head of the Catholic Church still free.

The question of Rome is the great question of Church and State all over the world. Gioberti left his fellow-countrymen a memorable warning:—‘Every scientific reform is vain if it does not make account of religion; and every scheme of Italian renovation, if it has not for its base the corner-stone of Catholicism. . . . And the evil will last as long as men persist in substituting a heathen or chimerical Italy in the place of a real and Christian Italy, which God and a life of 1800 years have created; that is to say, a French or German Italy, in place of an Italy of the Italians.’\* On the Temporal Sovereignty of the Pope Massimo d’Azzeglio held the same opinion. It was that held by most European statesmen. The saying of Thiers is well known:—‘Whoever makes a meal of the Pope dies of it.’ The judgments pronounced by English statesmen, such as Lords Lansdowne and Palmerston, in 1849, may be summed up in the words of Lord Brougham:—‘How is it possible to suppose that unless the Pope has enough of temporal authority to keep him independent of the other European Courts, jealousies and intrigues will not arise?’

A striking remark on this subject was made by M. de Montalembert. No one insisted more on the distinctness between the civil and the spiritual spheres; no one more ardently desired the freedom of

\* Gioberti, *Principio degli Italiani*, vol. ii. pp. 66, 67 (quoted by Cardinal Manning, in his *Independence of the Holy See*, p. 85).

each. His remark was this:—‘The temporal and religious powers are united at Rome that they may be able to remain separate everywhere else.’

What ought now to be the aspiration of a true Italian patriot? Must it not be that the interests of Italy and of Christendom should be permanently united? Would not Rome become Italian all the more if the religious affections of just Italians were allowed to gravitate to Rome as heretofore? Would it be no glory to them if Rome were at once the heart of Italy and the Head of a Spiritual Universe, as it was, in past times, of a material one? Would no security be added to the new kingdom if the patriotic sentiment of Italy became religious, and the religious sentiment patriotic? At a time when all nations are arming, would it not be well to remove that which creates in all nations an additional alarm, making the Liberal party in each tend to anarchy, and the religious to what is nicknamed ‘Ultramontanism’?

The Temporal Sovereignty was not given to the Church as an ornament, and though far the most ancient of sovereignties, it has fallen far the most often through violences of every sort; but it has always been restored. Sooner or later it will probably be again restored at Rome; but if the free kingdoms which grew up beneath its shelter should share its fall, it does not follow that they will share its restoration. In its place there may be an alternation of Tyrannies and Anarchies. It may be discovered when too late that a great Epoch of Civil Society was discarded for a dream.

CURRAGH CHASE,

*May 31st, 1888.*

## PART I.

### The Rebolt against Christian Civilization.

*CHRISTMAS EVE, 1859.*

#### I.

THIS night, O Earth, a Saviour germinate !  
Drop down, ye Heavens, your sweetness from above !  
This night is closed the iron book of Fate ;  
Open'd this night the book of endless Love.  
On from the Orient like a breeze doth move  
The joy world-wide—a breeze that wafts a freight  
Of vernal song o'er lands benumbed so late,  
Rivers ice-bound and winter-wasted grove.  
Onward from Bethlehem, westward o'er the Ægean  
Travels like night the starry Feast Divine ;  
All realms rejoice ; but loudest swells the pæan  
From that white Basilic on the Esquiline  
Beneath whose roof in sunlike radiance clad  
The suffering Pontiff stands—to-night not sad.

---

*ITALIAN 'UNIFICATION' IN 1860.*

## II.

THE land which Improvisatores throng  
 With one light bound would freedom improvise,  
 Freedom by England dragged from raging seas  
 Through centuries of battling right and wrong :  
 The gamesters crowned, their loaded dice down flung,  
 Divide their gains ; \* while—shamelessly at ease—  
 Gold-spangled Fortune, tinselled to the knees,  
 Runs on the tight-rope of the State new-strung !  
 O Liberty, stern goddess, sad and grave,  
 To whom are dear the hearts that watch and wait,  
 The hand laborious strenuous as the glaive,  
 The strong, staid head, the soul supreme o'er fate,  
 With what slow scorn thou turn'st incensed of mien  
 From mimic Freedom's operatic scene !

*GREAT CONNIVING POWERS.*

## III.

THE kingdom-selling king puts forth a hand  
 Vile from Church-plunder, leprous to the bone,  
 To rend a second spoil † from Peter's throne :  
 Silent, yet false, a proud yet servile band,

\* Napoleon got Nice and Savoy ; Victor Emanuel, the Northern Papal States and Lombardy. It was a 'Ten Years' War,' before 'Troy fell.'

† Ancona, etc. The French Emperor had solemnly guaranteed the remaining Papal territory against invasion.

Europe's 'Great Powers,' each from its distant  
strand

Applaud the dragon teeth thus deftly sown,  
Nor heed how France in treason's undertone  
Whispers, 'Rome next! Wait, win—and understand.'  
'Great Powers!' blind Powers, because they fear to  
see!

Old realms that seal an upstart's new decree!  
Think ye this traffic means for you no loss?  
Christ's Vicar bound, what king thenceforth is free?  
Death-doom of Europe's peace and liberty  
Is that your state-clerks smilingly engross!

---

## *THE RETRIBUTION.*

### IV.

STATESMEN, beware! The Spiritual Power displaced  
The Moral Power descends. Where then are ye?  
The eyeless Anarch of the years to be  
Draws near your feast; will meet you soon full-faced;  
With cap blood-red his low, base brows are graced:  
His name we know—'The Crowned Democracy.'  
Wild appetite and reckless pride is he;  
He scorns all laws on rights prescriptive based.  
He comes: what stands? God's Word that never errs  
Replies, 'The Church: of death she shall not taste.'  
If stands the Church, were it not better, Sirs,  
That girt by Nations just and sage she stood  
Than like one fortress 'mid a boundless waste,  
One sad, sole watch-tower by a shipless flood?



*JUVENILE PATRIOTISM.*

## V.

‘GREAT Rome our Capitol! Great Rome restored!’  
 These cries are watchwords, warring each on each;  
 Two forms confused of unhistoric speech:  
 Rome never reigned, a *single* nation’s lord;  
 Rome was at first not State, but bandit horde;  
 A State came next. O’er Carthage’ yawning breach  
 Rome dashed through flame while still beyond her  
 reach

Italian States the upstart’s name abhorred.  
 Later, Rome’s Empire rose: a subject earth  
 A world, not Nation, owned its sovereign sway:  
 It fell: at last Time’s mystery came to birth:  
 Rome was the Church’s seat; man’s hope, his stay.  
 Great Rome made pigmy, Rome *one* nation’s head,  
 Means this—‘The old Rome—the Christian—both  
 are dead.’

*THE ORIGIN OF THE TEMPORAL POWER.*

## VI.

For centuries rose the cry from vale and plain  
 From cities sacked and homesteads black with fire,  
 ‘Where reigned an Empire ruin now doth reign:  
 Our Emperor sought Byzantium: we expire:

The Lombard wrecks the north : pitiless in ire  
 The Goth devours the south. Fiercer than Cain  
 The Vandals with the blood of brethren stain  
 Altar and hearth. Great Pontiff, Roman Sire !  
 Christ's chief of shepherds for the souls of men  
 To thee we turn remembering days long since  
 When camped the Hun beneath the Roman wall—  
 That day Pope Leo saved us. Save, as then,  
 That little remnant left ! On thee we call :  
 Thy sons would be thy subjects : be our Prince !'

---

## *THE OLD AND NEW BARBARIANS.*

### VII.

WHEN Rome had fallen and now half-ruinous lay  
 Barbaric kings from many a distant coast  
 Alone, unarmed, meekest when mighty most,  
 Trod her deserted courts and wept, men say :  
 None raised therein his seat of sovereign sway :  
 Dumb through the wreck they glided like a ghost :  
 They *felt* the Past ! Who make that Past their boast  
 This hour feel nothing, braggarts of the day.  
 These mimic statesmen stand confuted thus :  
 'Rome ruled the earth through Greatness : that was  
     meet ;  
 Your trust is Gallic Fraud and "Plébiscite" :  
 Great Rome, metropolis of that world of old  
 Reduced to crown one new-raised state o'er-bold  
 Would make its impotence but ridiculous.'

*TO ITALY, 1861.*

## VIII.

ALL-RADIANT region ! would that thou wert free !  
Free 'mid thine Alpine realm of cloud and pine  
Free 'mid the rich vales of thine Apennine  
Free to the Adrian and the Tyrrhene Sea !  
God with a twofold freedom franchise thee !  
Freedom from alien bonds, so often thine,  
Freedom from Gentile hopes—death-fires that shine  
O'er the foul grave of Pagan liberty  
With Pagan empire side by side interred ;  
Then round the fixed throne of their Roman Sire  
Thy sister States should hang, a Pleiad choir  
With saintly beam unblunted and unblurred,  
A splendour to the Christian splendour clinging,  
A lyre star-strung ever the 'new song' singing !

---

*THE ITALY OF OLD.*

## IX.

NAPLES and Florence, Parma, Lucca—these  
Survived, the last of countless states that bore  
Their starry crowns in history's heaven of yore,  
Amalfi imaged in her subject seas,  
Pisa with laurel fresher for the breeze  
That waved the pinewoods shadowing her shore,  
Sienna famed in arts Genoa in war,  
Milan still proud of antique liturgies.

Great land ! thy patriots old these marvels prized,  
Each with its palace-keep and minster vast :  
Not fusion, but a realm confederate  
They hoped, they claimed ; now first a vulgarer fate  
Tramples that claim. Dissevered from their past  
They stand—in Freedom's name provincialized.

---

## *THE INVASION OF THE PAPAL STATES.*

SEPT. 1860.

### X.

O ITALY ! the guilt but half is thine !  
Thy sons they are not ; foes they are, not friends,  
These ill-crown'd kings that brim for ill-mask'd ends  
Freedom's pure cup with blasphemy's false wine.  
Thou of the hermit's cell, the martyr's shrine !  
Thou, dew'd with beauty and the Aonian dream  
Like Greece, but higher placed in God's great scheme,  
His second Salem's second Palestine !—  
The malison of Freedom evermore  
Cleave to his name who burst the eternal band  
That with Religion links her, hand in hand,  
And hurl'd the child against the sire in war.  
Religion spurn'd, there freedom hath no place :—  
Freedom the pillar is : Virtue its base !

---

*ROSSI.*

## XI.

ROMANS—in name—to Liberty, your god  
Who lift red hands, suppliants self-deified,  
Betwixt her altar and your rock of pride  
A stream there rolls fiercer than Alpine flood,  
A fatal stream of murdered Rossi's blood !  
For Liberty he lived ; and when he died,  
Prisoner that new Rienzi's corse beside  
The King, the Father, and the Pontiff stood !  
What rite piacular from that impious deed  
Hath cleansed your hands ? Accuse not adverse stars  
If guilt unwept achieve not virtue's meed.  
Years staunch not treason. All his sands old Time  
Shakes down to keep unblurred those characters  
Which calendar the Feasts of prosperous crime.

---

*TRUE AND FALSE LOVE OF FREEDOM.*

## XII.

THEY that for Freedom feel not love but lust,  
Irreverent, knowing not her spiritual claim,  
And they the votaries blind of windy fame,  
And they who cry, ' I will because I must,'  
They, too, that launch, false to a freeman's trust,  
A bandit's shaft revenge or greed their aim,  
And they that make her sacred cause their game  
From restlessness or spleen or sheer disgust

At duteous days—all these, the brood of night,  
Diverse by one black note detected stand,  
Their scorn of every barrier raised by right  
To awe self-will. Howe'er by virtue banned  
By wisdom spurned, that act the moment needs  
Licensed they deem ; holy whate'er succeeds.

---

*THE APPROACHING DEED.*

XIII.

THE streets lie silent in the shadows deep  
Of obelisk and statue o'er them thrown ;  
The foe advances, but the people sleep ;  
No sound save yon cicala's lazy drone :  
Sunshine intense each glittering dome doth steep,  
Each Lombard tower, each convent court grass-  
grown,  
Flames on the arch, and heats each column prone  
While feebler grows each fountain's drowsy leap.  
Methinks such stillness reigned that hour in Rome  
Three centuries since, when through the fiery air  
Rose, heard alone, the saintly Pontiff's prayer ;  
Rose, and a slumbering world escaped its doom :  
The Crescent sank 'neath red Lepanto's shore :—  
Woe to the world when Saints are heard no more !

---

*THE CONSUMMATION.*

20TH OF SEPTEMBER, 1870.

## XIV.

THE bolt hath fallen ! The Abominable that sate  
 By that sad prophet, Daniel, long foretold  
 Within God's Holy City throned of old,  
 The 'Abominable that maketh desolate,'  
 Within a holier city now keeps state :  
 One power alone the All-Just to him denies ;  
 He dares not quench the Daily Sacrifice :  
 Death-pale he sits prescient of coming fate.  
 Is it my crime, pale river, if no tears  
 Dropt from these eyes thy placid breast have stained  
 Freedom and Faith thus impiously profaned ?  
 Not so ! The hour is man's : with God the years :  
 Once more His Church will shame her children's  
     fears ;  
 True Freedom wax when Freedom's wraith hath  
     waned.

## PART II.

*THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND  
NATIONAL APOSTASY.*

## XV.

TRAMPLING a dark hill a red sun athwart  
 I saw a host that rent their clothes and hair  
 And dashed their spread hands 'gainst the sunset glare  
 And cried, 'Go from us, God, since God Thou art !

Utterly from our coasts and streets depart,  
Court, camp, and senate hall, and mountain bare ;  
Our pomp Thou troublest, and our feast dost scare,  
And with Thy temples dost confuse our mart !  
Depart Thou from our hearing and our seeing :  
Depart Thou from the works and ways of men  
Their laws, their thoughts, the inmost of their being :  
Black nightmare, hence, that earth may breathe  
again ! ’

‘ Can God depart ? ’ I asked. A voice replied,  
Close by, ‘ Not so ; each Sin at heart is *Deicide*. ’

---

*A RUINED FRENCH ABBEY.\**

XVI.

IN thee the Daily Sacrifice hath ceased—  
Twain Avarchs, shades far cast from Antichrist,  
Revolt, and blasphemy, Sin’s king and priest,  
Here slew the Just and for His raiment diced :  
Here Revolution, ruin-beneficed  
Sharpened with rapine’s file her dagger’s edge :  
She sold the spoil who wrought the sacrilege :  
False Freedom spake it ; and her word sufficed.  
O France, long dear to God, once saintly nation,  
Land of Saint Louis and the Fleur de Lys  
Must Italy partake thy desolation  
Partaking thy transgression ? Say, must she  
The grace and glory of God’s New Creation,  
Make end like yonder skeleton tower and thee ?

\* At St. Omer.



*THE LAWLESS RACE.*

## XVII.

THE Scriptures of the Unjust thus prophesy :  
‘The Gentiles we ! your Christian Good is Ill :  
We, faithless styled, to Babel faithful still,  
Build as she built and laws save hers defy :  
No difference we concede ’twixt Truth and Lie  
Save what the nations fashion. Each at will  
Some Faith should license ; fools dissentient kill :  
Best creed is ‘Unbelief, in Unity.’  
But what is written ? ‘This shall be the lot  
Of all who war, Jerusalem, on thee :  
Within their mouth the tongue dried up shall rot ;  
The eye drop out, that eye which would not see ;  
And, shivering as they stand, from off their bones  
Their flesh shall melt and rot upon the stones.’ \*

---

## XVIII.

REMEMBER, Italy, thy judged Compeer  
France that before thee trod the ways unblest :  
Long since she made her Revolution : rest  
She makes not yet, from anguished year to year  
Circling through wreck to ruin yet more drear.  
‘Make them a wheel !’ Thus prayed, by rebels  
pressed,  
The Prophet-King : how oft, a bitter jest,  
That warning haunts the thoughtful patriot’s ear !

\* Zacharias xiv. 12.

O Italy, discern 'twixt grain and chaff !  
For Freedom's sake the enchanter's cup fling down :  
Spurn the base brood that tempt but to betray !  
On whom, deceived ones, wage ye war this day ?  
On that sole King who held his sceptre-staff  
Freedom to fence ; for man's sake wore his crown.

---

*THE CHURCH OF THE MADELEINE AT  
PARIS AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.*

XIX.

O THAT the people of this guilty land  
Might estimate themselves and it aright !  
Accept yon Temple's sternly kind command  
Her warning vainly whispered day and night :  
To lift their glory to a loftier height  
A people raised this creature of their hand :—  
Teach them, huge pile, with all thy pillared might,  
Humility ! Do thou their boast withstand !  
Bid them, in sight of angels and of men  
Brow-bent and round thee kneeling, to confess  
That sin whose serpent offspring, not yet dead,  
Creeps round the earth and stings it ! Bid them  
    shed  
Such tears as fell in the waste wilderness  
On thy worn bosom, penitent Magdalen !

---

*THE STATUE OF VOLTAIRE,*

ERECTED IN PARIS DURING THE GERMAN INVASION OF  
1870.

## XX.

WHAT Shape ascends o'er yonder Stygian sea  
Of upturned faces—Shape far-off descried  
With myriad-wrinkled brow, and serpent-eyed?  
That city which adores him, who is she?  
Fitly the hour is chosen! Fatefully  
Advance the armies sent to plague the pride  
That built its tower on sand and God defied!  
High Priest of Unbelief and Anarchy  
Ris't thou to see thy work? the doom to hear  
Of nations, Christian once, that spurn their trust?  
Hark to that gun! More near it sounds, and near—  
Land of brave hearts! ere yet descends that woe  
Which comes to save not slay, thy Tempter know!  
Dash back that idol to its native dust!

---

*THE FRANCE OF A FUTURE TIME.*

## XXI.

LAUGH, thou that weep'st; or with thy weeping blend  
The glory of that joy which mocks at pain:  
Vain was thy pride; thy penance is not vain:  
That woe was the beginning, not the end:

Beyond that rain of fire I see descend  
Armies of God t'ward yon ensanguined plain ;  
And these the Cross and those the Crown sustain :—  
Elect of Penitents, thy forehead bend ;  
Meet thou that crown in hope that springs from love !  
Once more true greatness greets thee from above :  
At last, while far away the tempests rave,  
Forth from the ashes of thy Pagan boast  
Leaps thy new life ! 'Mid yon celestial host  
Thy Clotilde triumphs, and thy Genevieve.

---

*THE NEW GERMAN PERSECUTION.*

XXII.

REVOLTED province of the Church of God,  
But yesterday an Empire made ! Too long  
Thou lift'st the froward foot and clamorous tongue  
Unweeting of the retributive rod :  
Her singers once—her saints—thy pastures trod :  
Still rise her minster towers thy streets among :  
Her crumbling abbeys still denounce their wrong :  
Hers every flower that gems the sacred sod !  
This day thy Teachers world-renowned impeach  
With deepening spleen the Scriptures as the Pope :  
Learn from thy *second* fall ! refrain thy speech :  
With humbleness alone is stored thy hope :  
Judge thou thyself ; staunch first thy wound at home :  
Rome's prodigal is not the judge of Rome.

## XXIII.

FAIR Land ! A question I would ask of thee :  
 A time there was when, wanderers wild and rude,  
 Thy children clave the river, pierced the wood  
 Heart-strong yet blind, nor wise, nor just, nor free :—  
 What changed to Realms that raging Anarchy ?  
 What Power was that which tamed the barbarous  
     brood,  
 Evoked its thought ; its wayward will subdued ;  
 Its warring kingdoms crowned with unity ?  
 The Faith—the Church ! What *progress* had been  
     thine  
 That Church disowned ? Thy Nations where this  
     day  
 Shorn of that Faith's surviving discipline ?  
 Thy Prophet's teaching where ? Thy Poet's lay ?  
 That Church was Italy's selectest dower—  
 Are those her friends who mock its Head this hour ?

---

## THE FAITHFUL FEW.

## XXIV.

NOT vain that ten years' agony ! Thus much  
 It proved : whate'er were states and courts, whate'er  
 Statesmen sense-blind might swear and then unswear,  
 In Europe's heart survived great Nature's touch :  
 From farthest lands there flocked who scorned to  
     clutch  
 Fruit of false peace : they rushed to do and dare

Or die. Of such was Lamoricière,  
 Charette, O'Reilly, Pimodan ; of such  
 Kanzler, who, when the Roman wall in rolled,  
 Stood in the breach. Knights of the Faith, 'tis well !  
 Your place is with those Genoese of old  
 Who, sole of Europe, when Byzantium fell  
 Fought for the Cross. Ye saved mankind one shame :  
 Mentana guards your dead ; the Church your fame.

---

*MONTALEMBERT AND DE MÉRODE.*

XXV.

MONTALEMBERT ! De Mérode ! Linked were ye  
 In bonds more strong than those of human love,  
 Twins of one Faith and gendered from above—  
 One fruitful Truth, ' God's City must be free,'\*  
 Prime Truth of Christianized Civility :  
 For that one Truth in word and work ye strove ;  
 Nor strove in vain, as years to come shall prove  
 When those who shape their ' Throned Democracy,'  
 That Matter-God the foe of cot and crown,  
 Hard hunted by the creature of their hands,  
 Flee from his face amazed o'er seas and lands.  
 The praise of such ye spurned, nor feared their frown :  
 Ye battled for man's hope ; God's Church confessed :  
 Warriors, sleep well ; for ye have earned your rest.

\* ' That Jerusalem which is above is free : which is our mother.'—Gal. iv. 26.

*THE WORLD'S APPRECIATIONS.*

## XXVI.

MINUTER minds conceive not what is great :  
To them 'tis nothing as to fleshly ears  
The music of the planetary spheres :  
Its full-faced presence leaves them unelate ;  
And when, submissive to all-mastering fate,  
That greatness dies, or, deathless, disappears,  
Upon its grave the triflers drop no tears,  
The feasters not one hour their jests abate.  
To such what meant that Roman Kingship hoar,  
Link of the old world with ours? A gaud, now  
gone !  
—'Tis thus when parents die ! the wife, the son  
Weep by the bier ; the poor beside the door :  
Small shapes that buzz around feel anguish none :  
To cricket and to moth the house is as before.

---

*THE HIGHER CIVILIZATION.*

## XXVII.

BLOW struck at Rome an instant echo hath  
In every land where sits the Church a guest :  
The centre's there. A local church oppressed  
By popular madness or a tyrant's wrath  
Not less, like Thecla, lions in her path,  
May stand secure ; though galled in head and breast

May work God's work, then take a martyr's rest  
Cecilia-like, within the crimsoned bath  
Of her own blood. Meantime the Church is free,  
Her doctrine sure while free He sits at Rome  
Who speaks the authentic voice of Christendom :  
His Faith, all know, is hers. If bound were He,  
The whole no longer could secure the part :  
The world's broad hand would lie upon the Church's  
heart.

---

## PART III.

### *THE TEMPORAL POWER.*

#### XXVIII.

THAT one high realm which, not through fraud or  
force  
But for man's need, with glad consent of men  
Rose when the Roman empire lay a corse,  
And the Northern Beast forth bounding from his den  
Ravined alike on priest and citizen  
Hath oftenest fallen. Bandits without remorse  
Plotters low-voiced, and Peoples blasphemy-hoarse,  
Have wrought its fall again and yet again :  
Yet evermore that Hand beyond the skies  
Which raised it first, restores that Sign august :  
The nations wake ; they stare with wondering eyes ;  
'Tis there, that Power ! It lives because it must !  
The shade it is of Peter's Rock : far hurled  
It heaves along the great waves of the world.



*AUSTRIA AND SPAIN.*

## XXIX.

## IL GRAN RIFIUTO.

AUSTRIA and Spain, high daughters of a Past  
So rich in rites of sage civility,  
To Kings so loyal, yet in heart so free,  
So true to ancient Faith when Error's blast  
O'er the blind North in passionate tempest passed,  
So filial to the Apostolic See,  
So firm when Unbelief and Anarchy  
Down the prone gulfs dragged France so far and fast,  
And Nations silent stood :—What Sin, what Fate  
What poison froze your blood to stagnant gall  
When burst false Piedmont through that Roman gate?  
Lament, brave Cid, if souls can weep in heaven!  
Crowned Pole,\* lament! By that strong hand was  
driven  
The earth-conquering Moslem from Vienna's wall!

---

*THE NATIONS OF CHRISTENDOM.*

## XXX.

THE Mother of the churches was perforce  
The Mother of the Nations; for in each

\* When John Sobieski, King of Poland, after destroying the Turkish Army encamped around Vienna, made his entrance into the city, the People received him with the shout, 'There was a man sent from God whose name was John.'

That moral mind, pure will, true heart and speech  
Which urge great Nations starlike on their course  
Found in Religion, there alone, its source :  
'Twas hers the majesty of Law to teach ;  
To exalt high ends, illicit means impeach ;  
'Twixt loyal and obsequious make divorce.  
A clan can boast its past and wreak its rage ;  
A firm can waft its bales o'er lands and seas ;  
A school can paint its picture, write its page :  
What is it makes a Nation more than these ?  
That ' Law of Nations ' which to lawless might  
Limits assigns ; gives sovereignty to Right.

---

## *THE LAW OF NATIONS.*

### XXXI.

THE Law of Nations died the death that hour  
When Rome, the moulder of the Nations, fell :  
O'er earth and heard by all rang out the knell  
When first above the Capitolian tower  
Far streamed the standard of the Lawless Power :  
Nor less o'er palace, camp, and citadel  
That hour a whisper crept—in audible  
To lands of honour reft, old Europe's dower ;  
' Let us depart.' Their patron Saints august  
Left they that hour the Nations ? We, since then,  
Have seen strange omens and shall see again ;  
Treaties are null ! no realm the rest can trust !  
A shameful day draws to a stormy close :  
But whence or when the vengeance no man knows.

*ST. GREGORY THE GREAT AND  
CHARLEMAGNE.*

XXXII.

1.

GREGORY ! To thee her Faith our England owes ;  
But ere to England thine Augustine sailed  
Rome had in thee her secular ruler hailed :  
Freely her bishop for her prince she chose.  
Two ages passed, then Charlemagne arose :  
Crowned by Pope Leo 'mid his barons mailed  
He swore to shield thenceforth God's Church assailed  
By force or fraud. Unlike these days to those !  
The family of Kings have wrought a wrong  
First on their kingdoms' honour, next their own :  
What wrong ? The Sire of Kings lay late o'erthrown  
By hand usurping and the lying tongue ;  
Kings sat and kept the clothes of that wild throng :  
On Kings the loss shall fall—but not on Kings alone.

---

*ST. GREGORY THE GREAT AND  
ENGLAND.*

XXXIII.

2.

As when, descending from that God-led bark  
At last on Ararat's broad summit stayed  
A ruined earth's sad heir yet undismayed  
Forth paced with all his sons the Patriarch ;

As when above that world of waters stark  
He stood while down they rushed and standing  
prayed ;  
As when he followed, through some wave-worn glade  
With over-arching horns of granite dark  
That Hand which pointed still he knew not where :—  
Thus with his monks went forth from yonder pile  
Augustine missioned to that northern isle ;  
Yon Cœlian Hill descended thus footbare ;  
Thus found that wilderness he sought ; thus trod  
A stony land of death and gave that land to God.

---

### *THE NOBLE REVENGE.*

#### XXXIV.

THE nations stood around thee, frowning some  
Some coldly pitying when thy head lay low :  
On them what good for ill wilt thou bestow  
When Wrong that overcame is overcome ?  
When earth in Faith's eclipse lies cold and numb ;  
When pride hath reaped the fruits she help to sow ;  
When anarch peoples hurled from wealth to woe  
In vain deplore their vanished Christendom ;  
When from the nether night, his penal prison  
By spurious science loosed the Apostate Angel  
Lifts his red bond and claims the astonished lands  
Shine thou that hour, a sun from night new-risen,  
Chase thou with thine his foul, disproved evangel :  
Raise thou thy Cross, and bind the Murderer's hands !

## XXXV.

YET, yet, ye Kings, and rulers of the earth  
Lift up your eyes unto the hills eterne  
Whence your salvation comes ! From earth's dark urn  
The great floods burst ! O'er each ancestral hearth  
Look forth, ye bold and virtuous Poor, look forth ;  
The meteor signs of woes to come discern ;  
And whence the danger be not slow to learn ;  
Then greet it with loud scorn and warlike mirth.  
The banner of the Church is ever flying !  
Less than a storm avails not to unfold  
The Cross emblazoned there in massive gold :  
Away with doubts and sadness tears and sighing !  
It is by faith, by patience, and by dying  
That we must conquer as our sires of old.

---

*WALTER SCOTT AT THE TOMB OF THE  
STUARTS IN SAINT PETER'S.*

## XXXVI.

## 1.

THE wild deer, when the shaft is in his side  
Seeks his first lair beneath the forest hoar :  
Drawn back from reboant deeps the exhausted tide  
Breathes his last sob on the forsaken shore :  
When on the village green the sports have died  
The child stands knocking at his grandsire's door :  
So stands by this far tomb of Scotland's pride  
Her greatest son, death-doomed, and travel-sore.

So stand, last Singer of the Heroic Age !  
Dead are those years so loyal, brave, and high  
That whilome blazoned History's Missal page,  
Ring yet through thy glad Minstrel-Breviary :  
Old Pilgrim, ended is thy pilgrimage  
This hour. The shadows round thee close : now die !

---

*WALTER SCOTT AT THE TOMB OF THE  
STUARTS IN SAINT PETER'S.*

XXXVII.

2.

STAFF-PROPT he stands and all his country's past  
Streams back before his sadly-kindling eye ;  
King after King, as cloud on cloud when fast  
The storm-rack rushes through the autumnal sky :  
Aughrim to Flodden answers ! on the blast  
Now Mary's, now the Bruce's standards fly :  
Those earliest, Irish, kings he sees at last  
Cross-crowned on old Iona's shores who lie.  
Thus as he gazed, a Voice from vault and shrine  
Whispered around him—and from Peter's Tomb—  
' Not one alone but every Royal Line  
To my strong gates, as thou to these, shall come  
Heart-pierced at last : for mine they were ; and mine  
The cradles and the graves of Christendom.'

---

*THE 'ARA CÆLI' ON THE CAPITOL.*

## XXXVIII.

HERE, where of old the Roman Senate sate,  
 Where, thundering from his Capitolian throne  
 Co-regent of the Universal State  
 Jove o'er that Roman sceptre laid his own,  
 For centuries the Franciscans, humbly elate  
 Kept their aerial haunt and vigil lone  
 Here, like that lark which 'sings at heaven's gate'  
 Sang, first, Rome's Christmas carols ;—they are gone !  
 Far down beneath, the Benedictines lay  
 Of Orders first ; far down whose science soared \*  
 Highest ; far down Ignatius' Templars,† they  
 Who raised o'er earth the Crosier and the Sword :  
 Here reigned the triumph of Humility :  
 Thy pagan triumph, Pride, is here restored.

*THE RESTORATION.*

## XXXIX.

A SORROW that for shame had hid her face  
 Soared to Heaven's gate and knelt in penance there  
 Beneath the dusk cloud of her own wet hair  
 Weeping, as who would fain some deed erase  
 That blots in dread eclipse baptismal grace :  
 Like a felled tree with all its branches fair

\* The Dominican Order.

V.

† The Company of Jesus.

F F

She lay—her forehead on the ivory stair—  
Low murmuring, ‘Just art Thou, but I am base :’  
Then saw I in my spirit’s unsealed ken  
How Heaven’s bright hosts thrilled like the dews of  
morn

When May-winds on the sacred, snowy thorn  
Change diamonds into rubies : Magdalen  
Arose, and kissed the Saviour’s feet once more  
And to that suffering soul His peace and pardon bore.

---

## XL.

NATIONS self-cheated, this shall come to pass—  
From yonder altar to their kingdoms down  
True Kings once more shall pace, sceptre and crown  
On that dim sea of marble and of brass  
Showering, as angels on the sea of glass  
Their amaranth crowns. All Powers once more shall  
own

Man’s debt perpetual to Saint Peter’s throne,  
All lands there find their Freedom’s shield. Alas !  
What now are Kings ? A thousand years each nation  
Claimed to stand subject to a Father’s eye :  
All realms invoked the Apostle’s arbitration  
An unseen world their strength and unity :  
Proud kings, proud realms, your victory is your loss !  
That rule is brief which rests not on the Cross.

---



*SAINT PETER.*

## XLI.

Rock of the Rock ! As He, the Light of Light,  
Shows forth His Father's glory evermore,  
So show'st thou forth the Son's unshaken might  
Throned in thy unity on every shore :  
On thee His Church He built ; and though all night  
Tempests of leaguering demons round it roar  
The Gates of Hell prevail not, and the Right  
Beams lordliest through the breaking clouds of war.  
Strength of that Church ! the Nations round thee reel ;  
Like hunted creatures Kingdoms flee and pant ;  
But God upon His Church hath set His seal,  
Fusing His own eternal adamant  
Through all its bastions and its towers in thee :  
Luminous it stands through thy solidity.

---

*SAINT PETER.*

## XLII.

FIRST of the Faith he made confession sole  
Taught by the Father, not by flesh and blood :  
Then He the parts Who strengthens by the Whole  
Bade him make strong his brethren, and the rod  
Gave him of kingship. By that Syrian flood  
Lastly, a Love thrice-challenged he confessed  
That singly passed the love of all the rest  
And straightway to his hand Incarnate God

Lifting that Hand which made the worlds, accorded  
Rule of His flock world-wide both fair and pure :  
The mystery of His might in One he hoarded  
That all, made one, might live in one secure :  
In Christ the race redeemed is One ;—in thee  
Forth stands, a Sacrament, that Unity.

THE END



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